COUNT CAGLIOSTRO:

OR,

THE CHARLATAN.

A TALE OF

THE REIGN OF LOUIS XVI.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE DISCLOSURE.

WHEN the Duke reached his own apartment, he began to review the agitating scene which had just occurred. At one conclusion he speedily arrived; viz. that it was useless to wait for the Marchioness's answer. When he recalled her looks of bewildered horror at the first announce-

ment of the scheme—her obstinate incredulity in the seriousness of his proposal, and the latent conviction, which she seemed to feel, that he could not be so cruel as to execute his threats; all hopes of inducing her to consent to his infamous terms vanished. Other objections to the eligibility of his plan also rose to his mind. He recollected that, though in most matters, De Montolieu was an easy tempered man, it was not safe to tamper with any point which, in that nobleman's opinion, implicated his family dignity; and he clearly saw, that if his proposed intrigue with Antonia, and his concealment of her real parentage, should transpire, that he should certainly be called to a severe account by her supposed uncle-in-law. The knowledge of Antonia's relationship to the Marchioness, suggested to his mind a safer and a plainer course, than a reluctant agreement, which that

lady would do all in her power to counterwork. He would go to the Marquis the next morning, communicate to him the whole story without reserve, and boldly demand as his own the mistress whose elopement had already cost him so dear. If, too, the Marquis, as the Duke strongly suspected, entertained a lurking passion for Antonia, common decency would prevent him from intriguing with his own wife's daughter; and he could then do nothing else but surrender her up, to the friend who had unravelled for him such a daring and mysterious imposture.

Meditating on these execrable, cold-blooded schemes of villainy, the Duke fell asleep, and enjoyed a tranquil and refreshing slumber until the next morning.

It is a mistake to suppose, that a thorough and complete scoundrel suffers from uneasiness

of conscience. As long as he can stave off the disagreeable consequences which sometimes overtake misdeeds, but are not their infallible result, he often enjoys life exceedingly; far more, indeed, than his betters. He can breathe the congenial atmosphere of vice, without pain or difficulty. Crime is to him his natural element, and he exists in it, as comfortably, and as easily, as a fish in water. It is the partly bad—the man of mixed and contradictory character—not destitute of moral faculties, but not possessing them in a degree sufficient to controul his baser inclinations—who is first hurried into guilt by his impetuous passions, and then, when the pleasure is over, and the vanity of the temptation apparent, becomes a prey to the bitter upbraidings of conscience. This is the man who experiences that miserable reaction of his better feelings, called remorse, and realizes in

this world that hell, which religion declares to be his lot in the next.

It was the custom of the luxurious inmates of the château to take a cup of coffee, or some other slight refreshment, in their rooms, on first waking; and to descend about noon into the salle-à-manger, where they partook of a very substantial repast called breakfast. Before this hour, the company did not usually meet.

The next morning the Duke sought the dressing-room of his host. The latter had arisen, and was in the act of taking the slight repast to which we have alluded.

"By your leave, De Montolieu," said the Duke, "I will take my coffee with you this morning. I have an important communication to make to you."

"Good—I am delighted to hear so," replied the Marquis, yawning. "I wanted something

to amuse me. Let me send for fresh coffee, or do you prefer chocolate?"

"The chocolate, if you please," said the Duke.

"Now for your communication, Duke," cried De Montolieu, flinging himself back in his easy fauteuil.

"Since I saw you last night," said the Duke, beginning to sip his chocolate, "I have made some very interesting genealogical discoveries in your family tree."

The Marquis's brow darkened. Pride of ancestry was one of the strongest of his numerous stock of prejudices.

"The investigation of my genealogy," answered the Marquis, with great stiffness of manner, and dryness of tone, "must have impressed your mind with the conviction that the Montolieus are an old and noble race, who have always been ready to defend the honour of their line."

"It is not to that portion of your race who are quietly rotting in lead and velvet, that my communication refers. I allude to a certain fair shoot grafted on your matrimonial branch."

"My dear Duke," returned the Marquis, who did not understand raillery on the subject, "you are neither holding the language of heraldry nor that of the world. For God's sake speak out, and tell me in plain French what you mean."

"Well then," said the Duke, "to drop all farther metaphor, do you remember a certain bet we made over our cups some six months ago?"

"I have not such bitter reasons," said the Marquis, chuckling with triumph, "for recollecting the facts, as yourself; but my memory does not fail me on the subject."

"You recollect also," continued the Duke,

"that the fair damsel who was to have gained the prize of beauty on my behalf, eloped before she became the character which entitled her to compete with La Gabrielle."

"My poor Duke," cried the Marquis, "the loss of the thousand louis has certainly affected your wits. What has the dull recapitulation of stale facts got to do with my family tree?"

"Patience! I am approaching the end of my story; and the novelty of my catastrophe will atone for the dulness of the preceding narrative. In the most extraordinary manner, I have discovered the birth and genealogy of the young heroine that I intended to make my state mistress. And who, in the name of wonder, do you think she proves to be?"

"How can I tell?" replied the Marquis. "Somebody very grand, I suppose--a changeling princess, or an archbishop's bastard"

"Your last guess is not so bad. She has a cardinal for a great uncle. Now mark me. Put the cup from which you are sipping your coffee down on the table.—It is a beautiful specimen of Sèvres china; and I should be sorry to see you break it.—Then screw up your nerves as forcibly as possible. Tightly grasp the arms of your easy chair with both hands, and listen to what I am about to say."

"If my hands were at liberty," said the Marquis, "I should use them to hold my sides; for great will be my laughter, when after this solemn preamble, I shall see you delivered, like the mountain in labour, of something much more ridiculous than a mouse."

"The adventuress, then, to whom I allude," continued the Duke, speaking slowly and emphatically, "who was born without a surname, and to whom I gave the appellation of Volterra,

turns out to be the daughter of your wife, Marquis, and identical with Mademoiselle von Oberfeldt, who is now an inmate of this magnificent château."

The Duke had correctly anticipated the fate of the coffee-cup. Throwing it from him with violence, the Marquis started from his recumbent position, as if stung by a serpent. "The Marchioness de Montolieu's daughter!" exclaimed he, with intense rage. "You rave:—you have been dreaming, and in your madness mistake your visions for reality."

"I might with greater reason," replied the Duke, "compare you to a somnambulist, who walks about with his eyes open, and cannot see what is passing under his nose. I can call my whole household at Chamilly to prove the identity of Antonia di Volterra, and the adventuress who now passes as your wife's niece."

"The very last woman on earth I should have suspected!" said the Marquis, as if rather communing with his own thoughts, than answering the Duke. "'Sdeath, I shall go mad!"

"Come,—come," said the Duke, coolly; "such things have happened before now, even in the noble house of Montolieu. Was there not a certain Vicomtesse de Montolieu much patronised by the 'grand monarque?' And did not the Vicomte receive a marquisate, with divers broad lands, as the reward of his loyal and discreet complaisance?"

"Pooh! that was nothing—the Vicomtesse was a married woman. Her liaison with Louis the Fourteenth was conducted according to the strictest rules of etiquette and fashionable usage, and occasioned no scandal. It brought wealth and honours to her husband, and conferred historical celebrity on her descendants. But an

intrigue before marriage! an intrigue with some low, obscure, unknown fellow—a roturier perhaps.—Bah! the disgrace is irreparable."

"Well! for my own part," said the Duke, shrugging his shoulders, "I do not see why that which is a trifle in a married dame should be such an inexpiable enormity in a spinster. I admit, however, that the majority of the fashionable world are of your opinion. Be this as it may, the truth of my story is incontestable. Examine the Marchioness. Charge her directly with the imposture; and she will not have the effrontery to affect farther concealment."

"And Baron Swartzenheim!" continued the Marquis, "the German envoy to the Empress Catherine: I feel crazy at the recollection of the imposition. When I fancied that I was rallying him with such success, how the villain must have been laughing in his sleeve all the time."

"In truth," returned the Duke, "I think, that up to the present time the German has had the best of the jest."

"What shall I do?" said the Marquis, pacing the apartment with disordered steps. "What course shall I take? I will not countenance her a moment longer. Had she contracted a liaison with the greatest roué in Paris, I should not have interfered with her pleasures; but an intrigue before she was a married woman! her conduct is scandalous—irremediable! I will separate forthwith."

"Humph!" observed the Duke. "In that case you must restore the fortune she brought you. I would advise you to pause ere you take that step."

"Well then," exclaimed the Marquis, "I will obtain a lettre de cachet, and shut her up; her maintenance in the Bastille will not cost much."

"An excellent plan!" calmly responded the Duke, "if feasible. But I doubt whether in these times you will persuade the ministry to grant you such a favour. Necker has already refused two or three persons of the highest quality. A terrible change for the worse has silently and imperceptibly taken place in the system of government. Those lettres de cachet were such convenient things. If any audacious member of the numerous class of nobodies offended or stood in the way of one of the select order of somebodies, the aggrieved lord could easily extinguish the obnoxious individual for ever, by plunging him into that living tomb, a state prison. Such a power was some compensation for the loss of our hereditary rights of justice; but I am afraid, my friend, we have fallen on evil days. You will not be able to extort the lettre de cachet."

"At any rate I will make the attempt," said the Marquis. "If ever family crimes required that interposition of royal power, surely mine is that case. Lend me your powerful aid at Court, and I doubt not but that I shall succeed. The queen will take my part, for she does not like the Marchioness."

"But are you determined," said the Duke, in a tone of affected moderation, "to take all these violent steps before you have spoken to the Marchioness on the subject—before you are satisfied of her guilt?"

"I am quite convinced," eagerly answered the Marquis, "I want no farther evidence. Now my suspicions are aroused, I recollect a thousand little circumstances confirmatory of her guilt. An intrigue before marriage! Never till now has the house of Montolieu sustained such a disgrace."

"Well," said the Duke, "I will exert whatever influence I possess at Versailles to assist your cause; but I doubt our success. But what are you going to do with the young lady—your newly discovered daughter-in-law?"

"Take her—seduce her—ruin—kill her," exclaimed the Marquis, with rising fury. "Do what you like with her."

"I am obliged to you, my dear Marquis, for your extreme liberality; but a happy thought strikes me; can we not get her included in the lettre de cachet?"

"Certainly," answered the other, "she is an accomplice throughout the whole imposture. But what are you to gain by putting her in prison? You cannot visit her in the Bastille."

"No," said the Duke, "but four or five months' imprisonment is an excellent and approved medicine for pride and insolence. At

the end of that time, my young lady will be glad to purchase her liberty on any terms."

There is nothing, not even religious bigotry, which so effectually hardens the heart as the perpetual pursuit of selfish pleasures. Where his gratification is concerned, a roué is the most remorseless and cruel of men. He would sacrifice the whole world rather than deprive himself of a single agreeable sensation.

When the whole party assembled at noon, there was nothing in the Marquis's manner, which could lead Madame de Montolieu to the conclusion, that the Duke had disclosed the secret to her husband. The conversation was languid, but no single remark or allusion was dropped which argued the faintest suspicion on the Marquis's side of the real state of circumstances. Bred up in courts, he was naturally a good dissembler. He spoke to Antonia with

his usual cordiality; and the Duke admirably supported the game, by asking the Marchioness, with an air of affectionate politeness, how she had passed the night. They announced, however, their intention to return to Paris, but this sudden distaste for the country did not astonish Madame de Montolieu, who was well aware of their partiality for the capital. Their excursion to Veret was in her judgment much more surprising and unaccountable than their returning to the metropolis.

The day after, they took their departure, leaving the Marchioness in the most miserable state of uncertainty as to the probable safety of her secret. The sword was suspended over her by a much frailer support than a single hair—it rested on the Duc de Fronsac's mercy.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE KING, AND THE COURTIERS.

Arrived at Versailles, the Duke de Fronsac and the Marquis de Montolieu encountered no great difficulty in obtaining a private interview with the king. Louis the Sixteenth, to whom the exercise of any sort of power seems to have been an insupportable burthen, and who shrunk as much from regulating the ceremonies of a ball, as from promulgating an edict for the government of his kingdom, was too

happy to devolve the control of all matters, connected with presentations and interviews, to his Grand Chamberlain, the Duke de Dreux Brézé. Upon the mind of this nobleman, the ancient genealogy, high rank, and great wealth of the applicants, had their due effect. A day was instantly fixed for the interview.

Appointments between princes and subjects, are, at least, generally kept by the latter. The two noblemen took good care to be in the anteroom at the hour fixed on. After waiting some time, they were admitted into the royal closet.

The personal appearance of this unfortunate monarch is so well known, from the numerous portraits which are scattered over Europe, that it is quite unnecessary to describe his face and figure. Every one can recollect the fleshy and unintellectual contour of his countenance, redeemed, however, by a somewhat mild and bene-

volent expression. His simplicity of demeanour was great, but unsuited to a king. Nature had not gifted him with the imposing dignity, or the magnificent condescension, of his ancestor, Louis the Fourteenth ; and unfortunately, he had not sufficient ability to see the necessity of simulating these qualities, which so effectually awe and dazzle the vulgar herd of mankind.

He treated the two noblemen with a familiarity, that set them too soon and too much at ease in his company; while, unfortunately, the pleasing effect of such extreme condescension, was considerably impaired by the roughness and homeliness of his manners. After the first formal salutations were over, Louis the Sixteenth demanded the nature of their business.

" Every fresh visitor," said he, with a strong expression of weariness and distress, " that I

admit into my closet, is the herald of some new disaster, or embarrassment. Every body gives me advice, but nobody renders me assistance. One half of my counsellors are pushing me forwards. The other half are dragging me back. Half the crew are rowing to the north; half to the south; and both parties swear, that they are obeying my orders, and consulting my inclinations. What bad news do you bring, gentlemen? some fresh revolt in the provinces? some outrage at Paris?"

"It is indeed a misfortune, Sire," answered the Marquis, "that compels me to seek your presence, but the calamity is of a domestic nature, and affects none of your Majesty's loyal subjects, but the individual who now craves your aid and protection."

"God be praised!" cried Louis, much relieved to find that his suitors' business was not

political. "Monsieur le Marquis, I am sincerely sorry for your family grief, whatever it may be, though I cannot help rejoicing to learn, that my anticipations of fresh disturbances are not realized, for I am quite worn out with state perplexities. But what are the circumstances under which you ask for my assistance?"

"I will explain," answered the Marquis. "I have now been married to the Marchioness de Montolieu upwards of ten years; and during that time, I trust I have been a faithful and indulgent husband."

Louis the Sixteenth, who, unlike his predecessor, knew nothing of the scandal of his capital, gave implicit credit to the statement of the Marquis.

"A short time ago," resumed De Montolieu, "the Marchioness induced me to receive into my family a young person, whom she repre-

sented as her niece. The imposture was conducted with so much skill, and the girl sustained her fictitious character with so much tact and ability, that I should never have suspected the deception. Luckily my friend De Fronsac chanced to pay me a visit at my château. And I will request him to state the scandalous discoveries that ensued."

Louis turned, with a stolid look of wonderment, from the Marquis to his companion.

"Some years ago, Sire," interposed the Duke, "I was induced, from motives of charity, to adopt a young orphan. She proved to be of a vicious disposition, and subsequently eloped from my roof, in company with a young Englishman. For some months I lost all trace of the girl, nor did I again see her until the Marquis took me to his château at Veret, and introduced me to his wife's niece. What was

my surprise to recognise, in the pretended niece of the Marquis, my former protegée. I suppressed my astonishment, until I found myself alone with the Marchioness. I accused her of palming an adventuress on her husband, as her relation. She confessed the imposition; but stated, that the girl was in truth a natural child, which she had borne before marriage; and that excess of maternal affection had prompted her to adopt this measure, as the only means by which she could enjoy the society of her daughter. She appealed to my pity, and solicited my secrecy; but my duty to my friend overpowered every other consideration."

"This is a distressing business," said the King; "a very painful affair—but what can I do for you, Monsieur?"

"Sire," resumed De Montolieu, "it is evident from the manner in which this imposition

has been carried on—from the marks of premeditation which it wears—from the number of accomplices who must have been engaged in it—that the criminal and unhappy woman whom I have the misfortune to call my wife, has contracted acquaintances no less dishonourable to herself, than dangerous to me. My family honour—my fortune—nay, even my life—are hardly safe, if I am not armed with the power to prevent such conspiracies."

"And how am I to protect you, Monsieur?" said the King, with an exceedingly simple air.

"Give me authority to place this misguided woman, and the young adventuress whom she confesses to be her natural daughter, under restraint, until I can find means to detect their accomplices, and unravel their intrigues. Nothing but legal duress and confinement will be sufficient to coerce spirits capable of conceiving and executing such an audacious piece of imposture."

"I see now," said Louis, "at what you are aiming. You want me to grant you a lettre de cachet—but why not seek redress from the ordinary tribunals?"

"Consider, Sire," answered the Marquis, "the misery of exposing these family misfortunes to the vulgar gaze. It is bad enough to be deceived by one's wife, but ten times worse to know that every roturier in France is laughing at the deception, and thanking God that he is not the Marquis de Montolieu. Then look at the law's indefinite delay—the idle quibbles which both judges and advocates fondly seize upon, as a pretext for refusing substantial justice. Who can predict the decision of a suit, any more than the result of a battle? Skill and dexterity win the victory in both. So perhaps after I have convinced all France of my injury and the Marchioness's infamy, I may

hear judgment pronounced against me, because my lawyer or his clerk may have transposed or omitted a sentence in the pleadings. I am not even sure that this base conspiracy and imposition is a legal crime, and punishable by law."

"There is much truth in what you say, Monsieur," observed the King; "and I heartily condole with you on the misconduct of the Marchioness. As far as my own personal inclinations are concerned, I should not hesitate to comply with your application. But I assure you, such a step is entirely out of my power. Necker will not hear of lettres de cachet. He reads me a lecture every day, to prove how injuriously they operate on the happiness of my people. After all, he may be right. And one thing is quite certain, I ought to strive as much as possible to promote the welfare of Frenchmen."

" Such a wish is conformable to your Majesty's well-known benevolence," interrupted the Duke. " But if the descendant of a race who have fought and bled for France might presume to offer an honest opinion to the King whom he adores, I would counsel you, Sire, to attain the desirable end you spoke of, by following the dictates of your own excellent judgment. Distrust those advisers, who would persuade you to sacrifice power to popularity; and who would pluck from your crown its brightest jewels, under the pretence of rendering it a more pleasing object in your subjects' eyes. Grasp with a firm hand the sceptre of your ancestors, and govern according to those ancient laws and customs which have raised the state to its present pitch of glory and greatness."

" Ay," said the King, with somewhat of doubt and irresolution in his manner, " the queen

and her friends are always holding the same language to me: and sometimes I feel determined to embrace the course they recommend, but then"——

"What is the obstacle, Sire?" said the Duke.

"The deficit," returned Louis, with a sigh; "the increasing deficit in the revenues—the stubborn and disloyal refusal of the Parliament to register my edicts—the difficulty of collecting the taxes—the riots and disturbances, which can only be quelled by shedding blood. The thoughts of all these things rise to my mind; and then I pause, and hesitate, and begin to think that Necker's mild and peaceful plan of appeasing discontents by reform, is preferable to the employment of military force."

"But no military force," interposed the Marquis, "is requisite in the present case. All that I ask is your signature to a mandate, which will be implicitly obeyed."

"True—true," answered the feeble-minded monarch; "I had forgotten that. Well, Monsieur, I will see what can be done. Have you mentioned the matter to any of my ministers?"

"To none," replied the Marquis, "except to Monsieur Du Crosne, the lieutenant of police."

"He is acquainted then with the facts of your case?" said the King.

"He is, Sire."

"Well—he will attend at the council to-morrow; and if I can settle matters with Necker, I will issue the lettre de cachet."

Satisfied with the impression which they had made upon their monarch, the two noblemen took their leave.

"We have played our cards well," said the Marquis to his companion.

"Yes—pretty well as yet," replied the Duke; "but the real battle—the odd trick, to continue your metaphor—must be won to-morrow; and

Necker will not concede the point without a desperate struggle."

"True," said Montolieu, "I did not like to see the King yield his assent with so little difficulty. I fear the minister will be able to twist the royal weathercock back to its old place with the same facility."

"Never did you utter a truer prophecy," said the Duke. "With Louis the last word is always the truest, and the last plar .lways the wisest. The only way in wh... . e can win the game is to secure the highest trump."

"To whom do you allude?"

"To the Queen, man—to Marie Antoinette—whom else should I mean?"

"Alas! it is too late now," said De Montolieu, "that matter should have been thought of, and cared for before."

"That matter was thought of, and was cared for before, by your provident and disinterested

ally. Know that in half an hour I shall be admitted to the honour of an interview with the Queen, and if I don't enlist her in your cause, I will give you leave to take out my brains and throw them to your dog for breakfast."

"Incomparable De Fronsac! I could fall down and worship you."

"Oh fie! Reserve your pious adorations for the proper quarter. If you defraud Satan of his due, he will not stand your friend on the present occasion."

"Thou a[illegible]rince of devils! A greater than Satan!"

"Oh, shocking! Prythee, cease this diabolic blasphemy. Flattery dulls the wit, and I have need of all mine in the coming interview."

"Adieu, then, my dear De Fronsac, till to-morrow at the breaking up of the council, when we shall learn the king's decision."

CHAPTER XXX.

FEMALE INFLUENCE.

The council took place the next day as the King had intimated. It consisted only of the King; Monsieur Necker, the prime minister; and Monsieur Du Crosne, the lieutenant of police. When the business for which the council was convened was settled, Louis began, not without a certain trepidation and embarrassment in his manner, to introduce the subject of the lettre de cachet to his minister. He repeated the

statement made to him by the Marquis on the previous day, and insisted on the corroborative evidence of the Duke. He finished by asking the minister what he thought of the affiair; and whether it did not justify the use of a lettre de cachet.

"Why cannot the Marquis resort to the usual tribunals?" said Necker, with a dissatisfied air.

"The very question I put myself," said the King, "but it seems that the Marquis despairs of obtaining justice from the lawyers. And then he cannot bear to expose his domestic misery to the eyes of the public."

"Would such arguments as these," said Necker, "be for a moment listened to if urged on the behalf of the accused party? Why then should they be available to the prosecutor?"

"Recollect, Monsieur," said the King, who seemed somewhat scandalized at the observation,

"that the Marquis is a person of ancient family, high rank, and large property!"

"The better reason," answered Necker, with a severe air, "since society has conferred upon him such immense advantages, that he should abstain from grasping at unjust and exclusive privileges. Why should his ex-parte statements be received and acted upon like attested evidence? Why should he, more than any other man in France, be permitted to preclude his opponent from defence and reply?"

"I think," said the King, "you cannot doubt the lady's misconduct, if you believe the Duke's testimony, and I cannot conceive him capable of perjury. If then you consider the Marchioness guilty, where is the hardship or injustice in confining her for a moderate period? What harm can come of it? A mild imprisonment will compel her to discontinue her iniqui-

tous practices, and give her leisure to repent her past misdeeds. It is the first time, too, the Marquis ever asked a favour; and I feel sure I shall confer a vast obligation on him by granting his request."

"Is it the object of your Majesty's policy," continued Necker with an austere expression, "to conciliate the affections of a few coronetted favourites, or to promote the general happiness and prosperity of the millions over whom you reign?"

"I call God to witness!" exclaimed Louis with great emotion, "that it has ever been the chief and dearest wish of my heart to make my subjects happy. Never did fond father pray for the success of an only son, with more eagerness, than I have besought Heaven to pour its choicest blessings on my people."

"I believe you, Sire," said the minister,

touched at the manifest sincerity of his monarch. "In common with all France, I do ample justice to the excellence of your intentions, and the soundness of your judgement. Happy would it be for this country, if your Majesty could always be persuaded to follow such admirable guides, and to turn a deaf ear to the suggestions of perfidious advisers, whose rank, and not their merit, gives them access to your presence."

"In short, Monsieur," said the King twiddling about the button of his coat in a most painful state of irresolution, "you would advise me not to issue this lettre de cachet."

"Such undoubtedly is the advice," said Necker, "which I feel it my duty to tender to your Majesty. You asked just now, Sire, what harm could result to society from the imprisonment of a guilty woman. I ask you in return,

what loss does society sustain by the murder of an unworthy individual? No direct injury, I admit, accrues in either case, but the sense of insecurity, which, as a consequence of such acts, is engendered in the public mind, is the worst both of social and political evils. This time an irresponsible uncontrollable power has stricken down guilt; the next time it may prostrate innocence. Any violation of the established laws, on which depends the safety of men's lives and properties is bad; but their infraction by the executive power, is far more dangerous than their infringement by a criminal, and produces a train of ever extending evils, the remote consequences of which, it is almost beyond the human understanding either to estimate or trace."

The King paused awhile, and then said with firmness, "my conscience tells me that what

you say is right. Ah! Monsieur, you ought never to leave my side, for the moment you are out of sight, I am overpersuaded by other people. However, I will profit by your advice on this occasion, and not allow the Marquis de Montolieu to shut up his wife."

At this moment, the door of the chamber opened, and Marie Antoinette, unaccompanied by a single attendant, made her appearance. She was attired in a costume, which, however well it might be calculated to set off her face and figure, was unsuited, from its extreme plainness to a Queen of France. She advanced with smiling confidence to her husband, and said, "Forgive me this intrusion, Sire, but you will recollect that we expect the pleasure of your company at our fête to day. I would have sent you a note, but De Dreux Brézé declared, that he should expect the roof of the palace to

fall in after such a breach of etiquette, as dispatching a message to you while engaged at council. So finding nobody to commit the atrocity of disturbing you with a note, I was forced to be my own messenger."

Louis, who was somewhat wearied and exhausted with the schooling which Necker had inflicted on him, looked refreshed at the sight of his wife, and bade her sit down.

"We have just been considering, madame," said he, "whether we ought to shut up a lady, who has been playing some very naughty pranks."

Monsieur Necker seemed dreadfully annoyed at the prospect of discussing the matter with this fresh counsellor.

"And what was the result of your decision?" asked the Queen.

"Why, Monsieur Necker," answered Louis,

"has read me a very long lecture on the mischief arising from the employment of lettres de cachet, to every word of which I heartily subscribe."

"May I venture to enquire the culprit's name?" said the Queen.

"The Marchioness de Montolieu, madame," replied Necker, in a voice by which he meant to deprecate all farther discussion."

"Indeed," cried the Queen, "I am acquainted with her case; and very ill I think she has behaved. Such conduct ought not to pass unpunished."

"You see the manner," said the King turning to Necker, "in which the Marchioness is judged by her own sex."

"I have endeavoured," said Necker, with a sigh of weariness, "to demonstrate that the Marchioness's guilt or innocence is not the real subject for your Majesty's consideration."

"I suppose," observed the Queen, "I ought to be silent in so learned a presence: but it does appear to my simple apprehension, that the guilt or innocence of a culprit is a point that merits some attention from his judges."

"Well, I begin to think so too," said the simple-minded King.

Monsieur Du Crosne, the lieutenant of police, had not hitherto spoken. He had watched with anxious attention the struggle between the royal inclinations and the ministerial reasonings. For a moment the latter preponderated; and he determined to suppress the information which he was otherwise prepared to have brought forward. Now a fresh weight was thrown into the scale, and seeing that the abstract arguments of the minister began to kick the beam against the superficial petulance of the Queen, he hastened, like a true minister

of police, to support the cause of arbitrary power.

"The name of this Marchioness de Montolieu is inscribed on my list of suspicious persons; I have evidence to prove that not many months ago she paid a visit, in company with a hair-brained Count, named D'Ostalis, to no less a personage than the notorious Count Cagliostro."

"What!" said the Queen, turning pale with rage, "does that arch-traitor still pollute France with his presence? I thought that he was banished."

"True, Madam," replied Du Crosne, "but such is his audacity, that he has dared to return to the scene of his crimes. And such, unfortunately, is his pernicious dexterity, that he has contrived to elude the most vigilant researches of the police."

It is well known that Marie Antoinette was

deeply wounded by the suspicions which had been thrown on her character by the famous affair of the necklace; and that her hatred and desire for vengear[illegible]onnected with that conspiracy alr[illegible] amounted [illegible] frenzy.

"Do you mean to say," said she, with the utmost excitement, "that this woman — the Marchioness, visited that execrable charlatan Cagliostro?"

"Even so," answered Du Crosne. "And it would now appear by the statement made by her companion, and the excessive emotion which she manifested on that occasion, that some near and intimate connexion must exist between Madame de Montolieu and that too celebrated adventurer."

"And now," said Marie Antoinette, impetuously addressing herself to her husband, "can you hesitate to exercise your royal autho-

rity in bringing an odious criminal to condign punishment? This Marchioness—this disgrace to her high rank—is a friend and associate of Cagliostro, and ve[illegible]ly of that female demon La Mo[illegible]d the othe[illegible]onspirators in the necklace affair."

"This is mere conjecture and assumption," calmly observed Necker to the King. "Holding communication with a suspected person is not a crime by law; and your Majesty is bound to administer strict legal justice to the meanest peasant that owns your sway."

"That is very true," said the King.

"Good," interrupted the Queen. "I freely admit that justice is due to the meanest peasant; how much more then is it the right of the first subject of the realm? I—a Queen of France—the wife, daughter, and sister of kings—have been subjected to injuries and insults, that the

lowest of my sex could not have borne in patience. And what was the redress which the parliament of Paris afforded me? I appeal to you, Sire, who are acquainted with my sufferings on that occasion—who remember the days and nights that I passed in agonies, that a beggar might have pitied. Can you be surprised, that I should hold the authors of my misery in detestation?—that I should desire their punishment; and that when they or their acquaintance are proved guilty of other crimes, that I should deem them the last persons on earth towards whom your Majesty's prerogative of mercy can be with propriety exercised?"

"Be composed, Madam," said the King, who was obviously much affected by the pain, which the affair of the necklace had inflicted on his wife. "Be composed, I will issue this lettre de cachet, since you take it so much to heart."

But the minister was not formed of such flexible materials as his master. He remained firm and uncompromising, and seemed determined not to yield th[illegible]tion.

"Sire," sa[illegible] addres[illegible] himself more particularly to Louis, "when you did me the honour to appoint me to the responsible situation which I now hold, I only accepted office on certain terms, without which, I felt that all my efforts for the benefit of my country, and for the advancement of your Majesty's true honour and glory, would be baffled and attended with no results. One of the most important of these stipulations, was the virtual abolition of lettres de cachet during the period of my ministry. Your Majesty will pardon me, if I consider your disregard of this condition as an intimation that you have no farther occasion for my services."

The King looked frightened and perplexed, but said nothing.

"You will still remain King of France, Sir," said the Queen, [illegible]inful smile, "even when Monsie[illegible] Necker sh[illegible]ve deprived us of his valuable assistance. You will have the right to govern France according to the ancient law and custom of the realm. Tell me not of discontent and rebellion. Let your enemies but dare to show themselves; and then do you Sir, show yourself at the head of your faithful guards. Believe me, your foes, if the pitiful wretches deserve that term, will disappear like dew before the morning sun."

In the energy of her feelings, she waved her arm, and clenched her hand, as though she actually grasped the sword to which she recommended the appeal. The speech, however, did not produce its intended effect on the King's

mind. He was startled by the Queen's allusion to the necessity of quelling insubordination by military force; and said with an air of disapprobation— [illegible]

"Gently, M[illegible]an, gently—[illegible] will spill no blood myself, nor permit it to be shed by others in my name. It shall never be said that Louis the Sixteenth introduced the curse of civil war into this unhappy country, for whose punishment he was born a King."

"Am I to understand," coldly inquired Necker, "that your Majesty accepts my resignation?"

The expression of Louis indicated the most pitiful irresolution and perplexity. He paused for a moment or two.

"I wish, Monsieur Necker, that *I* had the power, like you, of resigning my office. God knows, how willingly I would transfer the scep-

tre into any hands, that were better fitted to wield it than my own."

"You may do worse than resign your sceptre," impetuously exc[illegible] Queen, "you may surrender [illegible] iota of [illegible] and still find, that you are unable to rid yourself of the danger and responsibility of the kingly office."

"Why was I born a king?" said the distressed monarch; "I strive to please all parties; and I succeed with none. Monsieur Necker, you see how the case stands. Let me for once be a King. I ask of you as a personal favour, to countersign this much disputed lettre de cachet. It is the first request of the sort I have ever made to you. It shall be the last."

Necker paused in deep thought for some moments. At last he replied, shaking his head with a melancholy air.

"Sire, we shall both fall victims to the same

weakness—the inability to say "no" in the right place: but it is impossible to refuse a request couched in such terms, as your Majesty has deigned to use."

The Lieuten[illegible] Police pr[illegible]d the lettre de cachet, and handed it to Necker, who though the expression of his countenance still indicated his extreme repugnance to the step, slowly and reluctantly countersigned the instrument. Such were the means by which the last lettre de cachet ever issued in France, was obtained! But it is easier to abolish names than things. The old monarchical forms of tyranny were indeed swept away, but the power and practice of arbitrary imprisonment long continued to desecrate France.

The council broke up; the Queen's face was brightened with triumph. The Lieutenant looked as proud and as pleased, as a cat who

has just caught a mouse. But the King and his minister left the closet with vexed and dissatisfied countenances.

When we consider the superfluous sensibility which the educated European exhibits to the most trivial and insignificant affronts—the tenacity with which he recollects, and the excessive zeal and fury with which he seeks revenge ; it must seem strange, that so many millions of such individuals, should tamely endure the sway of a monarch who possesses the fearful prerogative of arbitrary imprisonment. The chivalrous, high-spirited noblesse of France, who for a look—a word—a gesture—were willing to take another's life, or to peril their own in mortal combat, walked to a prison, at the sight of a lettre de cachet as silently and as submissively, as a wéll beaten hound slinks to its kennel. None ever thought of resistance,

and yet the process was about as odious and illegal, as could well be conceived. Persons totally unconscious of any legal offence, and apprehending no accusation, were suddenly shown the despotic mandate, and forthwith conducted to a state prison. Here they remained for an indefinite period of time, varying from a few months to many years, secluded from communication with their friends, and deprived of all control over their property. Many times they were not informed of their real or imaginary offence, or even the name of their accuser, and could only hazard remote conjectures as to the cause of their detention. No wonder, then, that a man like Necker, naturally inclined to liberal politics, and anxious to acquire popularity with the public, should be strongly opposed to a practice, so utterly subversive of all personal liberty and security. In fact, the

prime minister himself was not exempt from the operation of these fatal mandates, and might one day find himself transformed from the agent of oppression into its victim.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE BASTILLE.

For two or three days after the departure of the Marquis and his friend, the Marchioness and her daughter were filled with the greatest anxiety. Every moment they expected that the dire effects of the Duke's anger and disappointment would burst upon them from some unforeseen quarter; and they awaited in nervous trepidation the coming blow. A week elapsed, and nothing happened. The courage of the Marchioness began to revive; and she

thought that the storm had passed over. "Perhaps, after all," observed she, "the Duke had more of human feeling than I gave him credit for; perhaps he affected obduracy, in hope to bend me to his will, and had no serious intention of executing his threats."

Antonia did not participate in her mother's confidence. Her knowledge of De Fronsac's character forbade her to hope that he would forbear his vengeance.

"The hour of danger," said she, mournfully, "is come, but not gone. I know our enemy well. He is a complete egotist, utterly inaccessible to any sense of pity or compunction, brooking no disappointment, and pursuing his selfish schemes of pleasure with reckless and remorseless tenacity. I dread that he is now laying the mine which he will soon spring to our destruction."

"Another week elapsed without any realization of their fears; but, alas! on the morning of the fifteenth day after the departure of the Marquis, an exempt of the police, accompanied by a small party of armed men, arrived at the château. With the hard indifference characteristic of all the lower functionaries of government, they briefly showed the unhappy Marchioness and her daughter the lettre de cachet, and peremptorily ordered them to be ready within one hour to commence a journey to Paris. Such necessaries only as they could collect and pack up within that short period were they allowed to take with them. They asked to what prison they were about to be consigned, but received the callous reply, that they would find that out, when they arrived at their journey's end.

The Marchioness was utterly stunned by the

calamity; it exceeded her worst anticipations. She had prepared herself for the bitterest reproaches on the part of her husband, in the event of the Duke's revealing the secret. Nor had she expected that he would content himself with angry words. She had even prepared herself for separation and social disgrace. She had even dared to picture herself an exile from Paris and the fashionable world, living in some obscure corner in the country, deprived of all resources and amusements except the company of Antonia; and the scene, melancholy as it might seem to her gay contemporaries, was not without its peculiar charm for her. But to be hurried away to prison by brute force, without an interview with those who decided on her fate; without an opportunity of explaining or palliating her conduct, was more than she could endure. The actual severity of the blow had

outrun her wildest fears. The idea, too, that Antonia, her daughter, to enjoy whose society, to promote whose happiness, had been the sole object of her rash plans and intrigues, had fallen a victim to her policy, and was to be consigned to the same living tomb as herself, gave the finishing blow to her misery. Her fortitude sunk under this last consummation of distress, and she wept during the first part of her journey in unrestrained weakness. Antonia bore [illegible] misfortune with more firmness. This was not the first time she had tasted suffering. She was accustomed to reverses. Besides, she had by no means recovered her separation from Cleveland. Her heart had been utterly dried up and seared by this great grief; and it sustained all subsequent blows with diminished sensibility, if not with increased courage. Entirely forgetting her own share of the calamity, she endeavoured,

by the tenderest exhortations, to moderate the Marchioness's excess of grief.

"Compose yourself—recollect yourself, dearest mother," said Antonia, embracing the weeping lady with the warmest affection, "and do not give way in this terrible manner to sorrow,—pray be composed."

"Avoid me—hate me—curse me," shrieked the Marchioness, with frantic vehemence; "I am your worst enemy—your bitterest foe—the cause of all your misfortunes. I disgraced you even at your birth, and ever since that moment have persisted in the same course of injury and ruin."

"Forbear these dreadful expressions, for my sake—for your own," said Antonia, "they fill me with horror. Misfortune may defeat the the kindest intentions, but cannot in a generous mind impair the sensations of gratitude which

they excited. Had all your plans for my benefit been realized, I could not have loved you, when surrounded with fashion and splendour, with half the truth and fondness that I do now."

"Alas!" exclaimed the Marchioness, in a tone of despair, "I have left you nothing else to love but myself."

"Oh do not talk in this strain! if you love me, be calmer."

It was not until after much effort, and many severe struggles, that Madame de Montolieu could assume even a tolerable degree of composure. And still her eyes were involuntarily filled with tears; and still, from time to time, the rising throbs shook her breast with convulsive violence.

But both had one consolation under their afflictions—the lively and tender affection which subsisted between them. Each, imbued with

this delicious sentiment, felt more concerned for her companion's suffering than her own ; and each, engaged in the generous task of consolation, lost to a great extent the sense of personal sorrow. If the sympathy of friendship be essential to the enjoyment of prosperity,—if pleasure itself grow wearisome, unless it be shared with others—how infinitely precious does the sentiment of attachment become in the dark hour of adversity; when all have left us—when the good-natured world are unanimously satisfied that we have deserved our misfortunes, and mildly acquiesce in the propriety of our ruin—how sweet to find one to whom our calamities only render us an object of greater tenderness—one, who scorning to judge us by the vulgar test of success, gives us credit for all we had intended, but were prevented by adverse circumstances from executing. But this is not all.

Look on the other side of the picture. The operation of affection is like that of mercy, twice blessed. The man who is consoled and relieved by the assistance of a friend, does not experience half the pleasure in receiving the latter's benefits, however weighty they may be, which his generous ally feels in conferring them. What luxury can compare with the exquisite sense of satisfaction and exultation, which pervades the whole mind, after we have achieved a sacrifice for a friend? What spectacle so touches and excites the feelings as the sight of a desponding friend reviving under our cheering and encouragement? In fact there is scarcely a feeling incident to human nature which returns a greater harvest of pleasure, than a strong sense of attachment to a worthy object. And yet this sentiment—so pure—so beautiful—so pleasurable—so accessible to all—so admirable

a corrective to the natural egotism of even the best characters,—gently rousing and enlisting in its behalf all the kindlier feelings of humanity, this sentiment, which diminishes every woe by sharing it, and doubles every joy by sympathy, how little is it cultivated by mankind! "Uncommon," says Rochefoucault, "as true love is, it is not so uncommon as friendship." Even when inspired by all the passion and poetry of youth, the sentiment of attachment appears rare, and limited in its duration; and between individuals of an advanced age, or of the same sex, seems scarcely to have any existence at all.

Towards evening they arrived at Paris, and when the vehicle entered the Rue de St. Antoine, the Marchioness conjectured that the place of their destination was the Bastille. Nor was she deceived. The carriage halted at the avenue; the exempt spoke to the sentinel. The

first drawbridge was lowered; the carriage passed over, and proceeded to the Governor's house, which was situated outside the ditch that surrounded the fortress itself. The Major of the Bastille and the King's Lieutenant stood at the door, received the prisoners when they alighted from their carriage, and escorted them up stairs, accompanied by the exempt. Agitated and trembling, they entered a room, where M. De Launey, the Governor, was sitting at a table with divers huge registers before him. He had a disagreeable expression of severity, which was not redeemed or softened by the silly air of self-importance which sat upon his face. His physiognomy tallied with the general opinion which prevailed in society respecting his character. It is true his situation was not likely to prepossess the public in his favour; but De Launey was unpopular, even for a

Governor of the Bastille. Vague rumours were afloat, for nothing certain or precise was known of this mysterious prison,—of the cruelty and rigour with which he treated his prisoners. His overweening pride and folly were proved by better evidence—his own behaviour in society, where he gave general offence by his absurd pretensions to political importance and influence.

The Governor looked up with an awful frown from his registers as the party entered the room.

"Oho!" said he to the exempt, "whom have you brought us here, Monsieur Delavigne?—women, eh?"

"Two ladies, Monseigneur," replied the exempt.

"Humph!" we shall ascertain that fact officially," said the Governor; "give us the lettre de cachet."

The exempt handed the fatal instrument to De Launey.

"Oho!" said the latter, "these letters shall authorize you—um—um—Erminia Laura, Marchioness de Montolieu, née D'Albemonte, and Antonia Von Oberfeldt, otherwise Antonia di Volterra, falsely calling herself the niece of the said Marchioness—oh! oh!—You want your receipt, I suppose, Monsieur Delavigne?—good——."

The Governor then indorsed the lettre de cachet, with an acknowledgment that the within-named persons had been delivered into his custody, and returned it to the exempt, to whom it served as a proof that he had discharged his duty. Having received this testimonial, he immediately took his leave.

"So, so," resumed the Governor, looking over the register, "I see that this young lady is

described as falsely calling herself your niece, Madame la Marquise. You would do well to inform me who she really is, and what is the nature of your connexion with her."

The superintendents of the Bastille were very inquisitive about their prisoners' secrets. Even the turnkeys had strict orders to report to the Governor or Major any information which they might pick up from the captives they attended.

The Marchioness, whose nerves were much shattered by grief and fatigue, burst into tears at this painful question. Antonia, to whom resentment at her mother's treatment gave courage, prevented Madame de Montolieu from answering, and said to De Launey: "Monsieur le Gouverneur, it may be your agreeable duty to keep us locked up in this delightful residence, but not to ask us questions that may tend to criminate ourselves."

" No, Mademoiselle," replied the Governor, reddening with confusion, " but when a commission is appointed to examine you, which will doubtless be in a few weeks, I shall be present, and shall have power of suggesting any questions I choose to the commissioners; so that you will lose nothing by answering my present queries."

" I do not see," observed Antonia, with some petulance, " the advantage of anticipating a penance. By your leave, Monsieur le Gouverneur, we will defer the evil day until its legal and official season."

The Governor had been so upset by the sudden and unexpected resistance of Antonia, that he had returned an argumentative and even apologetic answer. A moment's reflexion convinced him of the feebleness of his young opponent; and enraged at his own weakness, he

determined to frighten her by a display of his strength and importance.

"Let me recommend you, young lady, or rather young woman, for I have no proofs of your nobility, but rather the contrary, to drop this insolent and flippant tone. I am the Governor of the Bastille!—think of that--the Governor of the Bastille!—and now you know who I am, I beg you will treat me with fitting respect."

"You say," rejoined the reckless Antonia, "that you are the governor of a prison, which means in homely language a jailor; I do treat you with fitting respect."

"This jesting is intolerable," exclaimed the Governor, in a pompous guttural tone, like an enraged turkey-cock; "I tell you, young woman, that I am the King's representative in this place—you smile, but I repeat it, I am the King's representative. What have you to say to that?"

"Nothing," replied Antonia, "only the circumstance shows that the King is not exempt from the common lot of mortality, but like his subjects liable to gross misrepresentations."

"This is all very fine," said the Governor, "very fine indeed. Madame de Montolieu, your chamber, while you and your companion are inmates of the Bastille, will be Number 3, in the Bazinière tower. Perhaps, if that young lady had been more prudent in her language, a pleasanter apartment might have been named."

The Governor made a sign to his lacquey; the latter slipped out, and returned with two ruffianly looking turnkeys. The Major of the Bastille then intimated to the prisoners, but in a much more civil manner than his superior, that they must follow him to their destined chamber. The Major led the way, and the two turnkeys followed the prisoners. They crossed the court in front of the Governor's

house, and came to the second drawbridge. The word was given, and the bridge lowered. A circumstance here occurred which impressed upon the prisoners the frightful secrecy characteristic of the usages of the Bastille. The sentinels, as the party passed by them, covered their faces with their hats, so that they might not be acquainted with the personal appearance of any of the prisoners confined in the fort.

After traversing many dark and winding passages, they came to a circular flight of stairs. Proceeding upwards, they reached the allotted apartment. One of the turnkeys opened the door. The Governor had threatened them with a bad apartment, and a miserable hole it was, for the habitation of two persons accustomed to all the comforts and luxuries of civilized life. The whole furniture of the room consisted of two wretched pallets, two chairs, and a coarse

table. The walls, which were whitewashed, were dirty, and scribbled over by former tenants. The light of the small window was obscured by the thick and close iron bars on its external orifice. Having cast a hawk's glance round the room, the Major and his satellites left the prisoners to the enjoyment of this delectable retreat.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE TEMPTER AND THE VICTIM.

At the expiration of the first month of confinement, the door of the prisoners' chamber opened at an unusual hour; and Antonia was informed by the turnkey that her presence was required in the council chamber. The Marchioness solicited permission to accompany her; but the turnkey, who seemed quite appalled at the audacity of the demand, declared her request to be utterly inadmissible. Antonia inquired the

object of the summons. The turnkey replied that it was probably to answer the interrogatories of the King's commissioner. Antonia had no alternative but to obey. She quietly followed the conductor into a room, situated in the centre of the fort. On entering, she recognized, to her inexpressible dismay, M. De Launey, and the Duke de Fronsac. They seemed to be disputing with each other.

"If Monsieur le Duc," said De Launey, in an offended tone, "absolutely insists upon my departure, it is my duty to obey. But I may say, without vanity, that my experience in these matters is great. Some of the most distinguished men in France have thought themselves fortunate in being able to avail themselves of my skill and astuteness in examining the prisoners."

"Monsieur le Marquis," returned the Duke,

in a tone of cool and civil contempt, "I return you many thanks for your kind offers of assistance, which I do not need; and I am certain that so obliging a personage as yourself—one so anxious even to give what is not wanted—will never refuse what is particularly requested—namely, your absence from the ensuing examination."

"Oh! very well, Monsieur le Duc; do not think I wish to press my services on anybody; I shall reserve them for those who have sense enough to appreciate their value."

With these words, he flung himself angrily out of the room, leaving the fair prisoner alone with the Duke.

Antonia remained transfixed with surprise, terror, and disgust. The man whom of all others she had most reason to detest stood before her, eyeing her with a licentious yet scornful

smile, and affecting to be amused with her consternation.

"Good morning," said De Fronsac to the trembling girl; "I took the liberty of calling on you, as I was assured that you are now always to be found at home. You can guess the purport of my visit!"

"I can, Monsieur le Duc," replied Antonia, to whom indignation supplied courage. "It was to enjoy the spectacle of the sufferings which you have caused by your malignant, and unprovoked attack."

"You wrong me," observed the Duke; "it forms no part of my character to commit gratuitous mischief. In fact, I would not take the trouble. It was necessary for my good pleasure, that you should yield yourself to my wishes; and it was to overcome the resistance which you opposed, that I inflicted the injuries that you call unprovoked."

"Yes! unprovoked!" returned Antonia, "had I not as good a right to escape from one I hated, as you had to pursue what you liked?"

"As good a right certainly," said De Fronsac. "But know, my fair metaphysician, that rights in this world are mere empty words unless enforced by power. I was born a wolf, you are the lamb. It is my nature to prey upon you. No doubt you have the right to escape my fangs, but I have the power to catch you. Are you so impious as to murmur against the established order of nature? Cease your resistance, and I will cease my persecutions."

"This cold-blooded avowal of a determination to perpetrate crime, whenever you can commit it with impunity, only confirms my resolve never to yield. Persecute as you will; to the last moment of my existence—with the last energies of expiring strength, I will continue to resist."

"Listen to me," said the Duke, with that cold calm fixedness of purpose, which constituted the basis of his character, "nay—never turn away your eyes in disgust, for I am going to speak the language of reason, not of passion. Look around you. Survey these massive walls—these triple barred outlets, which serve for windows. Beyond them are high walls and chevaux-de-frise—the guards—the sentinels—and the deep fosses!—You will admit that escape is impossible."

"I know not," replied Antonia, affecting hope where she certainly felt none. "Stronger forts than the Bastille have ere now been levelled with the dust, and captives have gained the outside of even securer dungeons than this."

"You wander, Antonia!" impatiently interrupted the Duke, "already confinement begins to impair your natural understanding. The

Bastille has stood for centuries, why should it not continue to stand for centuries more?—True, prisoners have escaped, but compare their number with those, that have been compelled to abide their misery. What does your chance of escape amount to?

"Little, perhaps," replied Antonia; "but proceed, to what do your remarks tend?"

"Consider," pursued De Fronsac impressively, "the dull monotonous torture of protracted imprisonment. Consider, what it is to gaze in horrid uniformity of agony, for thirty years, upon the same walls—the same stones—the same barred windows—the same boards—the same strip of sky. To see no human face but the harsh forbidding one of your jailor, repeated day after day. To hear no human voice, but his coarse unfeeling tones. Reflect what it is to possess no occupation—no subject of con-

templation, but your own pain; and to be forced—to be driven to muse on this hateful all-absorbing idea, until your faculties are either deranged by madness, or extinguished in idiocy. Calculate and weigh the number and extent of your painful sensations, during this long period of slowly drawn out torment; and then confess that the Bastille is a horrible abode."

"It is," replied Antonia firmly, "but your château is a worse."

"Be it so," said the Duke, "but I do not ask you to stay there for thirty years. Live at my château for six months. At the end of that period, you shall depart as rich as a prima-donna, and as free as the wind, at liberty to bestow your love and your gold upon whom you like. Admit that you pass the whole time in sighs and tears—I shall enjoy your grief, by the bye, for you never look so handsome as when

in tears,—the period of probation, however painful, will soon have passed—but your present sufferings will cease only with your life, unless I procure your release, which I swear only to grant on the terms I have intimated."

"Never!" answered Antonia, turning away—"Never can I overcome the just abhorrence I feel for your conduct and character."

"I do not ask for love," said the Duke mildly, "at least not such love as I dare say you wasted on the young Englishman I was blockhead enough to introduce to you. A little civility and complaisance is all that is required."

Antonia indignantly shook her head.

"Pause ere you reject my offer. It may not be repeated, and deliverance dawns upon you from no other quarter. Bethink you, were my château a hell, and I blacker than Satan, free-

dom for the rest of your life is cheaply bought by six months' companionship with me."

"I can conceive no fiend worse," answered Antonia, "than a bad man, who declares his determination to indulge in every crime which he has inclination and power to perpetrate."

"Be wise, and yield, ere it is too late," said the Duke menacingly.

"Should I by such means obtain also Madame de Montolieu's deliverance?" asked Antonia thoughtfully.

"I have nothing to do with that business," coldly replied the Duke; "you had better appeal to her husband; perhaps he will release her on the same terms. By the time you have left me, this second labour will prove a mere bagatelle. You remember the proverb, ''Tis only the first step, which costs much trouble.'"

"This passes endurance," exclaimed Anto-

nia; "spare yourself the trouble, sir, of making any farther offers, which are as useless for your purposes as they are insulting to my feelings. Know that I would rather die, rot, go mad, or starve piecemeal within these walls, than breathe the air of the same place an hour together with you."

"Is that your final answer?" said the Duke.

"It is," replied Antonia.

De Fronsac gazed on her with a malignant scowl for some moments, and then said, "when we next meet your tone will be humbled."

With these words he slowly withdrew.

When the Duke re-issued from the Bastille, he was plunged in a profound reverie. He threw himself into his carriage without speaking to his attendants, who were waiting for his orders. So deep was his abstraction, that the lacquey asked him two or three times where he

should direct the coachman to drive to, without receiving any answer. At length he roused himself from his reflexions, and ordered the carriage to proceed to the hôtel of the Lieutenant-General of the Police.

De Fronsac was lucky enough to find that much employed personage disengaged; he immediately mounted to the minister's bureau.

"How have you sped in your mission?" enquired Monsieur Du Crosne of the Duke.

"But badly, or rather not at all," returned the Duke; "not a tittle of information respecting her accomplices could I extract from the obstinate girl. I questioned and cross-examined her to no purpose. In vain I availed myself of my previous knowledge of her habits and disposition, and brought forward arguments and topics which were peculiarly suited to touch her feelings. She was inflexible."

"Did you tempt her with the hope of immediate release?"

"I did," replied De Fronsac, "but without effect."

"That is strange," said the Lieutenant-General of Police; "after a month's imprisonment in the Bastille, the most stubborn spirits are generally unnerved and thrown off their guard by the prospect of liberty."

"She is an extraordinary girl," answered the Duke musingly; "I confess myself baffled."

"I am afraid you are a bad commissioner inquisitor," said Monsieur du Crosne, laughing. "In truth, the trade requires some practice. We shall not find you again volunteering to examine another state prisoner. Come, Monsieur le Duc, do not look so grave; the greatest wit could not expect to succeed in his first essay."

" My failure is not the cause of my thoughtfulness," answered De Fronsac; " I was hesitating, whether I should communicate to you certain incidents, which have occurred to me; but the circumstances are so trivial, that it is, perhaps, scarcely worth while to occupy your time by the recital."

" I think no time lost," rejoined Du Crosne, " which is spent in listening to information. No doubt it may sometimes mislead us— no doubt we may sometimes go wrong in spite of its assistance—but without it we cannot advance a step. By all means tell me the facts—tell me them all, if you please—even those that appear most trifling. Straws thrown up in the air will serve to show the wind's course."

" I have been subject for some time past," said the Duke, " to a species of annoyance, petty and unimportant in itself, but occasioning

me anxiety by the remarkable mystery in which the authors are enveloped..'

"Of what nature is this annoyance?" asked du Crosne.

"Every day," continued de Fronsac, "I am harassed by written menaces."

"Do you mean," demanded Du Crosne, "that you are molested by anonymous letters?"

"Occasionally," said the Duke, "they have been sent by the medium of the post; but they assume a hundred different shapes and modes of appearance. Sometimes my eye is attracted by a scrap of paper, which, I know not how, comes under my hand. I take it up, and on looking at it, find it inscribed with the usual threat. Sometimes I see a dirty note, directed to me, lying on my toilette table. I call my valet, and ask him if he put it there. He denies all knowledge of it. My curiosity is excited. I

open it, and read the old threat. One day I resolutely abstained from looking at any paper which I saw lying about. I went into my library, and determined to fortify my mind against any superstitious fancies by the perusal of a philosophical work. I took down a volume of Helvetius, and lo! the irritating warning was written on the margin of the first page I glanced at. Nay, if I keep a letter in my pocket for a day or two, it will sometimes become marked in the most mysterious manner with the same writing."

"Do you suspect any of your domestics?" asked Du Crosne.

"I dismissed several," replied the Duke, "to see whether their absence would put an end to or at least lessen the frequency of these missives; but, finding the practice continued, I received them back."

"What is the purport of these threatening notes?" asked Du Crosne.

"They all contain this single sentence," replied the Duke: 'Remember the prophecy of Cagliostro.' "

Monsieur Du Crosne exhibited an expression of surprise, which did not escape the observation of the Duke, who quickly added, without giving the other time to make any comment, "you must know, my dear Du Crosne, that some four or five years back, when that rascal Cagliostro was in vogue, I was foolish enough to allow the knave to practise some of his magnetic mummery upon me. During the sleep into which he contrives to throw his dupes, he persuaded a silly bystander—an intimate friend of mine—that I had predicted the mode of my death. It must be to this incident, that the present system of annoyance refers."

"This is a most extraordinary story," observed Monsieur du Crosne. "The most plausible solution of the riddle that I can suggest is, that some scoundrel—either Cagliostro or somebody to whom he has communicated the incident—has corrupted one of your domestics. The difficulty is to supply an adequate motive for the commission of such an unmeaning act of malice. I cannot divine what object the perpetrators could have proposed to themselves."

"Is Cagliostro now in France?" inquired the Duke, with an air of the most unconscious innocence. "I thought he was banished."

"Ay," said Du Crosne; "but banished people sometimes return, like banished thoughts, when they are neither expected nor desired."

"True," said the Duke, thoughtfully, "most true—too true! You know then this adventurer to be in France? why not apprehend him?"

"Believe me," replied Du Crosne, "I have every possible inclination to take that step, whenever an opportunity occurs; but I am not assured of his presence in France; I have only reason to suspect that he is now resident in Paris under an assumed name, and new character. He has enlisted into the service of one, whose ample resources and criminal intentions will find him but too convenient a tool."

"Unfortunately," said the Duke, with a grimace, "his employers seem to leave him a great deal of leisure time, the benefit of which I am now tasting. But, perhaps, you think I attach too much importance to the circumstances I have detailed to you; and that I need not apprehend any serious attack, or substantial danger?"

"I hope not," replied Monsieur Du Crosne; "but I certainly am of opinion that the facts

you mention ought not to be passed over without notice. With your permission, Monsieur le Duc, I will place your hotel under the especial surveillance of the police, and direct its agents to watch the habits and connexions of your domestics. For I still cling to the idea, that these tricks you speak of, could only be executed by an inmate of your family."

"You may be sure," said the Duke, "that I shall afford your agents every facility for carrying on their investigation. The annoyance itself is trifling; but I do not relish the idea of Cagliostro's emissaries penetrating to my toilette table. Adieu, Monsieur Du Crosne; accept my warmest thanks for the patience with which you have heard my story, and for the prompt measures with which you propose to abate the nuisance."

"No thanks, Monsieur le Duc; it is my duty,

no less than my inclination, to protect the lives and happiness of all his majesty's subjects, especially those so eminent for their birth and rank as yourself."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

SHOULD THE FUTURE BE KNOWN?

On leaving the Lieutenant-general, the Duke hastened to Count D'Ostalis. The latter, to his visitor's extreme surprise, was sitting alone in his library, reading.

"Welcome, my dear Duke," cried D'Ostalis. "Did you ever think to behold me enacting the part of a solitary student? I have been reading for a good hour by the clock; and what is more, I have been reading a metaphysical, ethical, and moral discourse.

"I am afraid I interrupt your learned labours," said the Duke, smiling, "I will call some other time."

"Oh, no," returned the Count, in a flourishing tone; "I am always ready to sacrifice my own pursuits to the convenience of my friends. In other words," added he, laughing, "the book was just dropping out of my hands when you came in."

"Just the result I should have apprehended," said the Duke, with mocking gravity, "from such a lengthened effort of intellectual labour. Indeed, my dear D'Ostalis, you must beware of these learned excesses. You will wear out your faculties if you keep them on the stretch for such protracted periods of time. And what are the fruits of your profound investigation? What have you learned?"

"The author," replied the Count, "has very

solemnly and formally, and with great force of reasoning, invited me to pursue a plan, which I find on reflection I have been unconsciously practising all my life."

"What is that?" inquired the Duke.

"To refrain from seeking to know the future," replied D'Ostalis. "The chapter I read, was on the ridiculous and pernicious desire, which men have always manifested to pry into futurity. It shows, and shows very well too—only at fearful length—that if at twenty we were cursed with a knowledge of all the misfortunes we were destined to endure, in after life, we should hang ourselves in despair."

"This is odd enough!" said the Duke; your studies are singularly apropos to the subject on which I came to talk with you."

"How so?" enquired the Count. "Explain yourself."

"You remember," replied the Duke, "the

mystical jugglery which you witnessed Cagliostro perform over my body, when I was asleep on his cursed wire sofa. He made me pronounce, or rather appear to pronounce, some prophecy or other. You remember, my nerves were so shaken by the abominable drugs he had given me, that I consented to remain in ignorance of what had passed during my slumber. Well: I have come to-day for the purpose of making you reveal the whole scene to me; and, I own, I was struck by the extraordinary coincidence between the subject of your reading, and the object of my visit."

"Extraordinary indeed!" exclaimed the Count, who, as we have seen, was, amongst other weaknesses, a little prone to superstition. "De Fronsac, this is something more than a coincidence. Accept the incident as a warning, and obey it as such. Beware of asking me a

single question, respecting what you uttered, while plunged in that magic sleep on Cagliostro's couch."

"For shame! D'Ostalis," rejoined the Duke, smiling with ironical scorn. "What is the use of your sublime metaphysical and ethical investigations? What profit do you draw from profound and abstruse studies, continued, too, with unintermitting severity for such a frightful space of time, if, after all, you are to remain as superstitious as a sailor, or an old woman?"

"Ridicule proves nothing, De Fronsac," answered the Count, with a look of obstinate terror.

"Listen, then, to reason," pursued the Duke. "On a thousand previous occasions, when I have called upon you before, our thoughts were running on dissimilar topics. On this, my thousandth and first visit, you chance to be

reading about what I happen to be thinking of; and you are overwhelmed with astonishment. It is not so wonderful as throwing double-sixes twice running with the dice. A man dreams every night, and his visions never come true; once in ten years his dream bears some resemblance to events which subsequently happen. And lo! that which is nothing more than an imperfect action of the brain during sleep, arising from a want of sufficient exercise and fatigue during the day, is straightway considered as a supernatural communication from higher powers. The true wonder is, that as we dream of the past, and as the future is only a repetition of the past, we do not oftener prefigure forthcoming events in our slumbers."

"All this is unanswerable, I admit," said Count D'Ostalis in a dogged tone; "but though silenced, I am not a whit convinced. I own I

have a strong repugnance to acquaint you with the details of the scene you refer to. What possible good can accrue to you from the knowledge?"

"First tell me," replied the Duke, "what possible harm can arise from gratifying my wishes."

"Hear me," said Count D'Ostalis. "Your words and gestures, on that occasion, were horrible. Often have they recurred to my mind, and never without producing a disagreeable effect. If I, an uninterested spectator, or, at the best, a mere fashionable friend, cannot recollect your broken expressions without horror, what emotions will *you* not experience, whose fate was declared to be prefigured forth in them?"

"Nothing at all," answered the Duke with a hardy laugh; "for this plain reason, that I do not believe a syllable of my sleeping murmurs."

"Ay, ay," said the Count, sagaciously nodding his head; "'tis all very easy to feel courage when a bright afternoon sun is streaming through the windows, and the carriages are rattling in the streets; and the hum of distant voices is sounding on your ears; wait till the hour of solitude, and stillness, and darkness comes—wait till the pale moonlight, creeping over the walls of your bedroom, endues every object with ghastly animation—then the superstitious weakness, which you crush so easily now, will become a giant and tyrant fear, which you can neither endure nor drive away."

"A child of eight years old," replied the Duke, "would appreciate the force of your argument; but I am not afraid to be left alone in the dark. However, since you make so many objections to the disclosure of this unimportant secret, I will tell my real reason for wishing to be acquainted with it. I have lately received

threatening notices, reminding me in an ominous manner of the prophecy of Cagliostro. Now, as I believe, that out of ten accomplished prophecies, nine are fulfilled by the prophet, I should like to be aware of the nature of this famous prediction, in order that I might guard against its completion."

"This alters the case," said the Count; "but for my own part, I think that precautions for personal safety inspire so much anxiety, as to be a worse evil, than the danger they are intended to counteract. Better to die at once, than always to live in the fear of death. Against all ordinary attempts, you are as safe as another man; and a hundred thousand guards could not secure you from the desperation of an individual. Again I say, therefore, enjoy the present; and let the future take care of itself."

"My dear D'Ostalis," replied the Duke,

rather drily, "I will admit that you have displayed, during this discussion, a great range of intellectual power. At first you were philosophical—then poetical and descriptive—and now you are philosophical again. But I will not admit that you have a right to withhold from me a secret which concerns my personal safety; and which, it was agreed, you should reveal whenever I should request you."

"Since you ask me so pointedly," replied D'Ostalis, "I shall of course make no farther opposition. Without, then, troubling you with a minute description of your various motions, gestures, exclamations, and broken words, you appeared to me to be struggling with an angry and ferocious mob, who had stopped the progress of your carriage. You called to your servants to drive on; they seemed unable to obey. You were apparently engaged in personal

conflict with the crowd, and were finally overpowered, and cruelly torn to pieces."

"Excellent!" cried the Duke; "I see the whole plot. The Parisian populace have lately shown many symptoms of insubordination, and committed several outrages. This miscreant Cagliostro no doubt intends to seize the first opportunity of setting them on me. Everybody will be shocked at the catastrophe. Bye and bye the story will creep out, that Cagliostro has for many months prophecied the exact manner of the Duke de Fronsac's death, and the rascal will gain a reputation unequalled since the time of Albertus Magnus."

Count D'Ostalis pondered for a moment, and then said, "Ay, but how did he cause you, when lying asleep on the sofa, to indicate this particular mode of destruction by your cries and gestures? Another coincidence, eh, De Fronsac?"

"Not at all," replied the Duke with readiness. "I do not believe, that he had the power of inspiring me with any particular train of thought, when asleep. On the contrary, I believe that the nature of my cries, when in that state, which was purely accidental, has subsequently, in connexion with late events, suggested to him the sort of outrage with which he now daily threatens me. Had I gurgled in my sleep, like a drowning man, and talked about water, he would then have conceived the idea of pitching me over a bridge into the Seine."

"But how did he make you sleep, or dream at all?" asked D'Ostalis."

"I admit that fact," said the Duke, "to be extraordinary, but not supernatural. Probably the drugs, that he administered, possessed this peculiar property."

"And now," resumed Count D'Ostalis, "that

you fancy you know the quarter from which the danger is to be expected, what course will you take?"

"Prepare to meet it, or rather, to guard against it," replied De Fronsac.

"By what means?" asked the Count.

"Henceforth," said the Duke, "I shall avoid the more plebeian quarters of the city. I shall make it a rule never to traverse the Faubourg St. Antoine, or St. Marceau. Above all, I shall carry weapons myself, and arm my lacqueys and coachman from head to foot."

"Vain precautions all!" exclaimed the Count, "if you are destined to the fate; and if you are not, how should a hunted outlaw like Cagliostro, unable to show his true features in the street, and living under a fictitious name, have sufficient influence over the people to incite them to murder?"

"I think it far more reasonable," replied the Duke, "to ascribe to this man the greatest natural means and resources, than to allow him the smallest supernatural power. I have got what I wanted, and I am obliged to you for your information. Now let us change the subject. Shall you be at the Opera this evening?"

"I think so."

"I shall meet you there. *Au revoir* till then!" and the Duke somewhat abruptly took his leave.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE CONSEQUENCE OF HANGING OVER A BRIDGE.

How often, in matters of feeling, the simple instincts of the heart, guide us with a wisdom, which the most refined deductions of reason and experience cannot surpass. If Antonia had summoned to her assistance the world's most hoary and subtle veterans, and demanded of them a remedy for waning love, could they have suggested a more politic and efficacious course, than separation. Complaints and remonstrances irritate, and only accelerate, the catastrophe

which they deprecate. Increased attentions weary, or are felt as disguised reproaches. The only true cure for declining passion, is absence. It is a specific. No other medicine in the world has the least effect; and if it fails, torture yourself no more with remedies; it is clear that the neck of your passion is hopelessly broken. No expedient could have been better. From the peculiar nature of Cleveland's character, whilst she lived with him, he compared her with the unattainable standard of his own imagination. When she was gone, he judged her more fairly, by others who still remained, and began to appreciate her immense superiority to the rest of her sex. "Out of sight, out of mind," is an aphorism, which may be true, when applied to the vulgar herd: but the imaginative man never knows the full extent of his love, until he is separated from his mistress. It is

then that his natural susceptibility to the beautiful, exhausted and sated by too frequent and too familiar contemplation of the object of admiration, begins to revive. It is then that she rises on his memory, in all her original loveliness, decked in every charm both of mind and body, while the few slight blemishes, incident to the most perfect of the human race, which would sometimes intrude themselves on his notice, when they were daily exhibited to his view, become invisible in the distance. It would be attributing too much to the pleasures of imagination, which are rather intended to throw a grace and lustre over life, than to constitute its substantial happiness, if we asserted that Cleveland did not suffer by Antonia's absence. On the contrary, he felt it deeply, and would have purchased her reappearance at any price. But he had a consolation—the indulgence of his memory.

His grief at her loss was not all bitterness, but mingled with sweet, and, perhaps, exaggerated reminiscences of the delicious moments he had spent in her society. At all events, he no longer experienced the miserable vacuity of heart and soul, under which he laboured before his acquaintance with Antonia. He had now both a wish and a hope: The wish to see once more that loved and fairy form—once more to hear that thrilling voice—once more to exchange words with her, and read his answer in the beautiful and eloquent play of her expressive features: The hope—that could he once achieve an interview with her, he should soon be able to induce a resumption of their former ties. A flattering conviction lurked at the bottom of his heart, that he should not be allowed to sue in vain.

Like all deserted lovers, Cleveland became

much addicted to solitary walks. He was wont to ramble through the streets with a slow step and occupied air, absorbed in his own thoughts, and utterly unconscious of the busy crowds who passed by. Looking up from one of these fits of abstraction, he started. Chance had led his unguided footsteps to the Pont Neuf, the memorable bridge where he had first met Antonia. With what undefinable and tumultuous feelings did he gaze upon its stony structure! He twice paced its pavement from one end to the other. He placed himself on the very spot, where he had caught Antonia, as she was about to take the fatal leap. He leaned over the balustrade, and contemplated the dark and rapid current beneath. Suddenly he was aroused from his reverie, by what seemed the voice of a young female, speaking in low and whispering tones. The sound seemed to come

from under the bridge yet he was aware, that as few boats were used on the Seine, they could not proceed from thence. He turned sharply round, expecting to find the person who had uttered them at his side. But no human being was near, with the exception of a shabby, haggard artizan, who, at some yards distance, seemed engaged like himself in hanging over the bridge, and counting the ripples on the river.

Cleveland attributed the sound to fancy, and relapsed into his former contemplative mood. Again the voice reached his ear. This time he could not be mistaken. The accents were clearer. He could even distinguish the words. He listened with intense attention.

" You regret Antonia"—said the voice, " It would be wiser to regain her. You pass your days in cherishing her image, and putting up

vows for her happiness. It would be better to spend your time, and exercise your imagination, in devising means to rescue her from the Bastille."

Here his astonishment and curiosity had mounted to such a pitch, that he could not help turning round to look at his neighbour, to ascertain, if he either heard the voice, or was concerned in producing it. The man was still gazing on the river in idle contemplation. His lips did not move, yet Cleveland still heard the mysterious voice whispering as before, though he could not distinguish the words, except when his face was turned towards the river.

Cleveland was puzzled and annoyed. Was he dreaming in broad daylight? Were his senses wandering? He grasped the parapet of the bridge, as if to assure himself of its reality. A superstitious feeling began to creep over his

mind. He thought of the mysterious and warning voices recorded in ancient annals—"The airy tongues that syllable men's names." Were such as these now buzzing in his ear, or was he the dupe of human imposture? Above all, come the voice whence it would, was its information correct?

He resumed his listening attitude. Again the soft tones of the unknown speaker fell upon his ear.

"You are free," it said, "to gaze upon the sky, and fancy every fleecy cloud an island of the blest, floating on its blue ethereal ocean—a fit residence for yourself and Antonia. But the object of all these unavailing, though romantic ideas, languishes in prison, and sees only the same narrow strip, which pours its melancholy light through the grating of her cell."

"Who are you? Where are you?" said Cleveland, with more agitation in his manner, than he would have liked a witness to have beheld.

"I am one, who knows both you and Antonia, better than you know either me or yourselves. As to my situation, I am at your side."

Cleveland started, and looked towards his elbow. Nobody was there.

The voice seemed to laugh at his credulity.

"Why do you thus mock me?" asked Cleveland, angrily.

"Partly for your own benefit—partly for my own amusement. A forsaken lover is such a fine subject for ventriloquism, that it is impossible to resist the temptation."

The secret of the whole trick immediately flashed upon Cleveland. His shabby-looking neighbour, was a ventriloquist. His first sensation was a sentiment of anger, that a stranger

whose rank in society was so inferior to his own, should venture to play with his most delicate feelings; but his anxiety and curiosity respecting Antonia's fate, speedily suppressed his resentment. He well knew that no correct information is ever gained by rage; and he determined to examine the ventriloquist by every possible means, until he could ascertain, whether the assertions which the latter made respecting Antonia's present situation, were founded on truth, or were mere random conjectures which he had thrown out at a venture. He approached the individual—pulled out his purse, and said—

"My good friend, I am sorry to see an artist of such distinguished power in your present garb. Your talent for ventriloquism will be better appreciated, when you are gayer clad. Take these pieces of gold," added Cleveland, putting into the stranger's hand five louis-d'or,

"Provide yourself with a regular place of exhibition. As much more will be at your service, when you shall have answered two or three little questions, which I will take the liberty to put to you."

"I observe," replied the other smiling, and balancing the coin in his palm, "that whenever milord Cleveland makes the smallest request, he always scatters about his mon[illegible] th[illegible] reprehensible prodigality. Such [illegible] dicates on his own part a very unphilosophical contempt for the precious article, and shows, besides, that he has the worst possible opinion of his fellow-creatures."

"Nay," replied Cleveland, "if your feelings are so outraged, I will take back the money, and you can give your information gratis."

"No," said the ventriloquist, coolly depositing the money in his pouch; "my formal rejection

of such a trifling sum might be misconstrued into a vulgar and ostentatious display of disinterestedness. Besides, the best correction of the practice I complain of, is for the insulted party to observe an uniform rule of taking whatever is offered."

"I believe so, too," replied Cleveland; "and now, my friend, after thanking you for the moral [illegible] I have just received, allow me to ask my [illegible]ntious monitor, where he first formed my acquaintance, and who apprized him, that I took such a deep interest in the lady whose Christian name he has just mentioned?"

"This is not the first time I have spoken to you in the tone of an equal," boldly answered the ventriloquist. "Did you never sup with me?"

"Never, I am certain," rejoined Cleveland, smiling; "I admit I may have kept company with rogues, but they were always well-dressed

villains. Besides, King George has not a better memory for faces than I have, and I cannot recollect your features."

"Never mind," said the ventriloquist, "oblivion is the deserved fate of a badly-dressed villain. But mark my words, a day is fast coming, when the gayest attired nobleman in Paris will envy the security conferred upon me by this ragged and dirty blouse."

"Very likely," replied Cleveland drily; "in the mean time, while your prophecy is fulfilling, will you condescend to answer the question I have put to you?"

"A bridge on the Seine," said the ventriloquist, "when the wind is blowing from the north-east, is a bad locality for long explanations."

"It is my own fault," returned Cleveland, "I chose the place."

"There spoke the true aristocrat," cried the other, with a bitter laugh. "The rich milord Cleveland chooses to endure the cold,—therefore the journeyman mechanic must not pretend to any feelings;—velvet and satin, for want of other idleness, voluntarily expose themselves to the inclemency of the elements, therefore frieze jacket must not presume to exercise his common sense."

"You are severe," said Cleveland, who was determined not to be offended; "but I assumed, contrary to what appears to be the case, that the inconvenience, which seemed trifling even to me, would be entirely disregarded by you. But was not the inference at least probable, from the superior tenderness of my education and nurture?"

"Humph!" rejoined the ventriloquist, "your superior education is hardly a sufficient reason

for following your footsteps. You might choose to jump from this bridge, instead of merely standing on it, on a gusty day; and for no better reason than because fortune had so loaded you with her favours, that you had nothing left to wish for; but I am not bound to imitate you."

Convinced by this allusion to an occurrence, the knowledge of which was confined to himself and Antonia, that this singular individual must be in some manner intimately acquainted with his lost mistress, Cleveland felt a redoubled desire to question him at farther length.

"Let us then take shelter in the streets, since the present place does not suit you."

"Horror of horrors!" exclaimed the other, who appeared to enjoy the turn the conversation took. "Oh, violation of all social decorum! What! exhibit wealth seeking the company of poverty!—One of the privileged class walking

arm in arm with one of the people!—monstrous! The phenomenon is more extraordinary than the lion lying down with the kid, or the wolf with the lamb. The spectacle will turn the heads of the good Parisians. They will think it prognosticates the advent of a new Messiah."

"Mocking quibbles!" said Cleveland. "You sought this interview. You must have some motive for desiring an explanation; and yet when I offer an opportunity, you put me off with banter. Call upon me at my lodgings."

"No," replied the other, "you shall visit mine; that is to say, if you dare. Here is my card."

Cleveland read on the dirty scrap of pasteboard which the other handed to him, "Jean Brisseau, Printer, Rue de Lesdiguères, Faubourg St. Antoine." "I will not fail you," said he.

"Will you really come?" rejoined the other; "that is bold. All-powerful love, to what will you not compel us!"

"At what hour shall I come?"

"Dusk," replied the other.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE CONDITION.

CLEVELAND returned home, musing on the character of his new acquaintance. It was evident, from his allusions, that he was intimately acquainted with Antonia, and must have possessed great influence over her to have obtained from her, an account of the incident which first brought her in contact with himself. That she was imprisoned in the Bastille, he did not for a moment believe. What minister would take the trouble to send a poor obscure and uncon-

nected girl to a state prison? He looked upon the assertion as made at random, with a view to startle his nerves and to rouse his attention. Some misgivings crossed his mind as to the prudence of putting himself within the power of such a questionable personage as his morning's acquaintance, by entering his haunts. But he was constitutionally brave, and his acquired indifference to life had exaggerated this feeling into a careless rashness and unreasonable indifference to danger. Besides, he argued to himself with some plausibility, that if this ventriloquist had wished to entrap him, he would have adopted a quieter and milder demeanour, calculated to inspire confidence; whereas his object had evidently been to dazzle and astonish—to excite curiosity and wonder, even at the risk of rousing suspicion.

As the evening approached, he took a fiacre

and drove to the Faubourg St. Antoine. Dismissing his vehicle, he easily found the house designated on the card. It was a printing office. He rung the bell, and the door opened. He walked boldly in, and found himself in a bare dirty room, surrounded by types, compositors' desks, and the other apparatus of the typographical art.

"Is Jean Brisseau at home?" said he, in a loud firm voice.

"Behold him," said the ventriloquist, stepping forward from a door on the opposite side of the apartment; "Good, you are punctual to my vague appointment; but we are exposed to interruption in this place. Let us adjourn to a safer apartment."

He raised a trapdoor, so artificially constructed in the floor, that it would probably have escaped any casual observer's notice. A

rough flight of stairs was visible. Brisseau motioned to Cleveland to descend them. A slight feeling of hesitation came over him, but a moment's reflexion convinced him that his true policy was either to trust Brisseau altogether or not at all. He decided on the former course, and stepped boldly down the stairs. Brisseau followed him, closing the trapdoor behind him.

At the bottom of the flight, Cleveland found himself in a large subterranean apartment or cellar, well lighted by a strong lamp, which hung from the centre of the roof. There was a printing press in the middle of the room, with some numbers of a periodical publication scattered about the machine. It would have been imprudent in Cleveland to have exhibited too much curiosity, but he could not help casting a few glances on the sheets. He immediately recognized them to be numbers of an illicit and

exceedingly seditious newspaper, which had lately, to the great chagrin of the government, been much circulated among the lower orders of the French metropolis.

"Well, sir," cried Brisseau, seating himself, and motioning to Cleveland to do the same, "what is the object of your visit here?"

"I have come," said Cleveland, "to hear you explain at greater length than you were inclined to do this morning, the origin and extent of the acquaintance which you pretend to have formed with me."

"I repeat that I have often enjoyed the pleasure of your society," replied Brisseau, "before this morning. I was present at the Duke de Fronsac's supper, when those two precious representatives of modern chivalry betted, instead of fighting, about the beauty of their respective mistresses. Even before your connexion with

Mademoiselle di Volterra, your character had interested me. I studied it with attention, and found abundant matter both for admiration and pity."

"Indeed," said Cleveland, smiling, "I was not at all aware of the honour I enjoyed."

"Are you offended, my proud reserved islander, that the mechanic, Jean Brisseau, admired and pitied you?"

"Not at all," replied Cleveland. "If you have studied my character to any purpose, you must know, that though bitter experience deters me from seeking the sympathy of those about me, I value—deeply value the good opinion of the lowest and humblest human being, when it is genuine and disinterested. Nay, the attachment of a dog is not to me an object of indifference."

"Spoken like yourself!" exclaimed the prin-

ter, approvingly. "You are not the aristocrat I began to think you."

"But it was surely not in your character of Jean Brisseau," said Cleveland, "that you gained access to the Duc de Fronsac's parties. What part did you enact on those occasions?"

"That is a secret," replied the other. "I dare not tell you; because I may need the disguise again."

"You were pleased to say," replied Cleveland, "that you were attracted and interested by my peculiarities of disposition, even before my connexion with Mademoiselle di Volterra. How could such a circumstance affect your feelings towards me?"

"That, also," replied Brisseau, smiling, "must remain a mystery to you."

"Enough of myself," said Cleveland. "Tell

me something of Mademoiselle di Volterra." And he suppressed a sigh as he asked the question. "Under whose protection is she now residing?"

"The King's."

"The King's!" repeated Cleveland, incredulously.

"Yes," answered Brisseau; "she is now living under the protection of the King, as represented by the very unheroic Marquis de Launey, Governor of the Bastille."

"Oh God! is she really immured in that horrible prison?—do not trifle with me on the subject."

"I speak, alas! in serious sadness," replied Brisseau, "when I say she has been an inmate of the Bastille for the last four months."

"Four months!" repeated Cleveland, in a tone of horror; "and I all this time——" he

struck his forehead violently with his clenched hand.

"——Have spent the day in hanging over bridges, and gazing upon the moon;" said Brisseau, finishing the broken exclamation. "Well! it is all the better that you passed the interval, unconscious of her fate. You could not have rendered her the smallest aid."

"Yes, yes; I could," returned Cleveland, impetuously. "I could have flown to Versailles, gained an audience of the King—pleaded the cause of truth, justice, and innocence, and have procured her release."

"Go to Versailles!" exclaimed Brisseau. "What boyish folly! Hear me. Without disparagement to your abilities, abler men have ere now pleaded the cause of truth, justice, and innocence at Versailles, and have had judgment given against them. But had you such superior

eloquence, as to succeed where everybody had failed, what in truth would your story in substance amount to? That the young lady in question had lived with you for some months in a very equivocal capacity, which you most probably would not think it worth while minutely to analyze; that during that period you had every reason to be satisfied with the young lady's conduct; that certain, morbid, over-refined, and complicated emotions, which no length of explanation would enable so pudding-headed a personage as his most Christian Majesty Louis the Sixteenth to understand, had induced a separation. That during her absence your passion had renewed with ten-fold vigour, and, consequently, that it was very improper to shut up the object of so much love and tenderness in the Bastille."

Despite his agitation and pain at the con-

firmation of Antonia's imprisonment, Cleveland could hardly help smiling at Brisseau's description of his applications.

"Any story, however affecting, may be caricatured," said Cleveland; "Louis the Sixteenth has ere now granted more unreasonable requests than mine."

"No doubt," returned Brisseau; "but consider the political state of the court at the present moment. Tomorrow is the all-important day, on which the States-General meet for the first time. Every brain in France, not belonging to a lover or an idiot, is throbbing, whirling, splitting with excitement at the anticipated result of this grand political experiment. Some hearts beat high with hope; others sink with gloomy apprehension; but the attention of all is fixed, concentrated, absorbed, by this all-engrossing subject. Nothing else is talked of

during the day, nothing else is dreamed of by night; no other topic of conversation is permitted in any class of society. You smile—but you are a lover, and have no time to waste on such tedious trifles as the fate of empires, or the destinies of millions. Well! the centre of all this agitation is the King; of all the over-excited minds and wearied brains in France, the fat and feeble cerebrum of Louis Capet suffers the most. Not only is he torn to pieces by his own natural doubts and fears; but he is surrounded by a crowd of courtiers, ministers, priests, nobles, and princes of the blood, who all pull and tug him different ways, just as the mob of porters and waiters treat an English traveller, when he first lands on the Calais pier. The King resigns himself in passive despair to the strongest puller——"

"What does all this tend to?" interrupted

Cleveland, impatiently. "If true, how does it affect Antonia or myself?"

"Thus much," replied Brisseau; "at such a moment, in such a state, can you expect the harassed preoccupied monarch to examine the case of an obscure prisoner in the Bastille, and to adjudicate thereon?"

"Why not?" said Cleveland, with enthusiasm. "However numerous or important his occupations, he should always find time to do justice; and if he cannot, he ought to abdicate, and descend from a throne, the duties of which he cannot discharge."

"Hear me," answered Brisseau, shrugging his shoulders; "if you are determined to rescue the lady of your love by your own personal exertions, take your pocket pistols and batter the massy walls of the Bastille until you have effected a practicable breach; then rush forward with

your court sword, and storm the fortress single-handed, like one of Ariosto's heroes. Such an attempt would be moderate, feasible, and rational, compared with your present notion."

"Why so?" persisted Cleveland, although beginning himself to doubt the efficacy of his interference at Versailles. "The influence of the English Ambassador will procure me a personal interview whenever I wish."

"Good," retorted Brisseau. "Grant that, after a world of solicitations, you are allowed to enter the King's closet for a few minutes, how will you advance your object? What will you gain by it? Louis will assume perhaps a painful air of attention—will gaze on you with lack-lustre eyes, and suppose from your earnestness and eagerness, that you are stating some matter connected with the States General. You finish

—present your petition or memorial, and are ushered out. The King hands over the document to his private secretary, with faint orders to examine it and make his report thereon. The Secretary at such a moment, would as soon think of going through a complete course of theological reading; and it will lie in his desk until it has accumulated a certain amount o dust and dirt, and it will then be transferr[illegible] his cook."

"Is there then no resource, no remedy?" said Cleveland despondingly. "Must I quietly acquiesce in the undeserved misery of the being I love best on earth?"

"Any efforts that you make to rescue her," replied Brisseau, "will prove abortive, and in all probability aggravate the condition of her whom they are intended to benefit."

"Is there no hope then?"

"I did not say that," returned Brisseau.

"If I must despair," said Cleveland, "who shall dare to undertake the enterprise."

"No individual," replied Brisseau, "can succeed."

"Who then shall free her?" enquired Cleveland.

"A power, mightier than individuals," answered Brisseau, in a more impressive manner than he had yet used, "mightier even than a crowned King, is at work, which while it sweeps away the rich and powerful by myriads, may prove the harbinger of deliverance to one, who now seems cut off from all hope of escape; even as the hurricane, which engulfs a fleet, may float to shore a fragile casket."

"To what power do you allude," said Cleveland, who like most of the English then in Paris apprehended no convulsion or disturbance,

from the establishment of a form of government similar to their own.

"The resistless march of events,"—replied Brisseau, "the force of inevitable circumstances—which rolls on its predetermined course, shattering old tyrannies, and creating new tyrants; obliterating ancient prejudices and substituting modern follies; overturning, changing, destroying, and reproducing laws, governments, customs, manners, and feelings; while the human pigmies who figure as chiefs—who, raised to-day, are crushed to-morrow, yet dare to deem themselves the causers and movers of the scene, are but in truth so many passive links in the long mysterious chain, which binds the whole universe in a scheme of fated necessity."

"So I am to wait with folded arms, according to your counsel," said Cleveland "until events set her at liberty: like Horace's rustic, waiting

on the bank, until the river should run dry. I confess I see no symptoms of the social convulsion which you forebode."

"Let that pass," replied the other impatiently, "and answer truly the question I shall put to you. Were Antonia di Volterra, whose image now seems so exclusively to occupy your heart and head, as to deprive you of all power of observing what is passing around you,—were this cherished object of your thoughts and wishes restored to you at the present moment,—examine well your intentions and feelings towards her, and say, would your future conduct be really calculated to promote her happiness?"

"If a lover," said Cleveland, "who deems the mere presence of his mistress a luxury, greater than the whole world besides could afford him, is likely to make her happy, I answer your question in the affirmative."

"If such a man's deeds," gravely replied Brisseau, "were consistent with his sentiments, he would guard his mistress's honour as jealously as his own—would scorn to expose her to the world's reproach, by maintaining a connexion with her, which society condemns. Do your past acts correspond with these principles; and what are your intentions for the future?"

Cleveland bit his lips, and remained silent for some moments. At length he answered in a constrained voice, "I came hither, Monsieur Brisseau, upon the understanding that I should receive some interesting intelligence, not to be catechised by an utter stranger as to my most secret thoughts, views, and intentions."

"You think to take refuge from my question in the petty formalities of society," replied Brisseau; "I admit the enquiry to offend against all rules of polite intercourse, and I still press

the question, which you must answer either by your words, or your silence; but, in the latter event, despair of ever again beholding Antonia di Volterra."

He spoke with that calm, collected, impressive energy, which inspires an irresistible conviction, that the speaker has the power to execute what he threatens. Cleveland gazed on him with involuntary astonishment; but a moment's reflexion speedily convinced him that an obscure mechanic, destitute of powerful connexions or extensive resources, could not possess the extraordinary influence he affected.

"If words," replied Cleveland drily, "were evidence of strength, you, my friend, would be little less than omnipotent. You talk like a god, but you look like a journeyman printer. The ardour of your genius makes you overlook the glaring inference which arises from the fact,

that the man, who cannot raise himself in life above the condition of a mechanic, is not likely to be able to control the fate of others who are better off than himself."

"Bad reasoning!" said Brisseau coolly; "because a courier's drunkenness has ere now changed the fate of empires: but when I spoke of an eternal separation, I only threatened what I, already in part, have executed. I was the cause that she originally left you."

"Indeed!" replied Cleveland, who began to breathe hard; "you have a singular mode of recommending yourself to those persons whom you honour with your attention. Pray," added he, in the thick voice of rising passion, "were you also the cause of her imprisonment in the Bastille?"

"Alas! indirectly I was," answered Brisseau; "but be calm, I will redeem my error before

long. I placed her in a station where I deemed she would have been high and happy; but the scheme exploded, and the miserable sequel was what I tell you."

"For God's sake, good Monsieur Brisseau," cried Cleveland, "refrain from all future interference in other folk's affairs. Your intentions may be good, but your means are most unlucky; you were pleased to intimate your good-will to me, and seemed to feel a still stronger interest in the fate of the young lady we have been speaking of. What is the result of your well-meant exertions in behalf of the parties towards whom you are thus favourably disposed? One loses the society which constituted the chief charm of his existence; the other is deprived of her liberty: and both of happiness."

"Part of these effects I designed," answered Brisseau; "a part has happened in spite of my

conjured him not to betray his presence. Cleveland made no great opposition to the manœuvre, though he was puzzled to know why the printer should be alarmed at being seen in company with a gentleman. To speak truly, he wished to know something more of Brisseau, than he could discover by the conversational skirmishes which had hitherto taken place between them; and it occurred to him, that the visitor, unaware of the presence of a third party, might very possibly drop some allusion, or ask some question, which might throw a light on the previous pursuits and character of his new acquaintance. Like most persons ensconced behind a screen, he speedily found a friendly chink sufficient to gratify his curiosity. The moment Brisseau had disposed of the Englishman, he opened the door.

A fashionably dressed and handsome man,

between forty and fifty years of age, walked in. Cleveland at once recognized him to be the celebrated La Clos, the private secretary of the Duke of Orleans, renowned even in that licentious age for the surpassing profligacy of his literary conceptions. His novel of the *Liaisons Dangereuses* produces on the mind of the reader, by the intense immorality of its characters, the same effect which other authors strive to attain by the description of physical horrors. The portraiture of the Comtesse de Merteuil would appal the most vicious person that ever lived.

"What news from Versailles?" said Brisseau.

"Plenty," replied the new comer, "so good as to be almost bad."

"Ah! the danger I always foreboded," exclaimed Brisseau; "we have invoked a storm to show the incapacity of the present pilot, and to form a pretext for substituting another; and

I am afraid the tempest will blow the whole ship to pieces."

"You have exactly touched the very centre of my apprehensions," said La Clos.

"But why give way to fear?" replied Brisseau; "let the tempest rage as it will, two clever fellows, like ourselves, may manage to build a raft out of the ship, that furious winds, instead of sinking, may waft to fortune."

La Clos shook his head. "Who," said he "can foretell his fate in a revolution?"

"What is the general temper and spirit of the deputies of the Tiers Etat?" enquired Brisseau.

"All are filled," replied La Clos, "with boundless hopes and impossible aspirations; they have unanimously agreed to absorb the other two states, by compelling them to vote by numbers instead of by orders. This will be their first step. I have spoken to many others,

who avow, that nothing less will content them, than the abolition of titles and privileges, the confiscation of Church property, and the reduction of the royal authority to a point which will leave Louis the Sixteenth the crowned president of a republic, rather than King of France. The first point of the problem being established, viz. that the States-General will attempt to overthrow monarchy; the next point essential to ascertain is, what course the monarch will take?"

"Say, rather," replied Brisseau, "what course will the court take? for the court ultimately governs the monarch."

"The King's personal inclinations," said La Clos, "would lead him to yield; but his wife and courtiers will sooner or later urge him into resistance."

"Then comes the tug of war," cried Brisseau, in a low yet exulting voice; "then comes

the crisis—then comes the immortal moment in which we shall strike the grand blow."

"That blow, Brisseau, we shall never strike."

"Why not?" asked Brisseau, impetuously.

"I have sounded our chief," said La Clos, with an air of melancholy composure, "and find him wanting. Mark me, Brisseau, Philip of Orleans will never be king. He has not stuff enough in him to form an usurper. His levity and weakness are inconceivable. He has no moral courage. When the prospect of the crown was so distant as to be unattainable, he coveted the prize with a child's eagerness. Now that circumstances and our own exertions have brought it within his reach, with a child's caprice or timidity he relaxes his pursuit."

"But we will strike the blow for him," said Brisseau.

"He will not let us," answered La Clos. "At

the last moment he will hesitate, and refuse us his authority. When the scheme was in embryo, it amused his imagination; now it draws near, he trembles at its magnitude and importance."

"Well, then," cried Brisseau, "we will on in our career, and strike for ourselves. The last three weeks, I have been disseminating papers among the French guards, that would have made the wig of the "Grand Monarque" uncurl itself with horror. Then, thanks to my exertions; all the grisettes in Paris are glowing with enthusiasm for the States General. Treason and pleasure are mingled in their kisses, and while their military heroes fancy themselves teaching the art of love, they are in truth learning the catechism of revolution. Above all, the privates and subalterns are hugeously tickled with the clause in the cahiers, in which the constituents instruct their representatives to demand an increase of pay for the

army. What unknown friend to our plots first started the idea? It was indeed a vast stroke of policy to outweigh the influence of present payment by a prospective bribe."

"The neutrality of the military," replied La Clos, "were the utmost we could expect; they will not assist in the work of rebellion."

"Some will," said Brisseau.

"Still, the main business of insurrection," said La Clos, "must be effected by popular force. What success have you had in organizing the chaotic elements of revolt?"

"I have enlisted in my service," said Brisseau, "eleven invaluable emissaries."

"At a great expense?" asked La Clos, "that, however," added he, "is a secondary consideration."

"Six," answered Brisseau, "are mercenary desperadoes, whom I pay with hard cash. Two

enthusiasts, whom I pay with words; that is, I occasionally harangue them. The other three have joined me from mere love of fighting and mischief. They are incessantly spreading sedition in their respective quarters; and the first time that any public event rouses the Parisian populace into insurrection, they will head them, and direct the energies of the crowd to some definite practicable design."

"Remember," said La Clos, "the Bastille must be the first object of attack."

"Fear not," replied Brisseau; "I have good reasons for not forgetting your plans."

"I shall now proceed to the Palais Royale," said La Clos, "and report progress. My news will be coldly received, because I bring him nearer and nearer to the Rubicon, which he has neither courage enough to cross, nor prudence enough to fly."

"Never mind," said Brisseau; "On, on, for our own sakes, if not for his."

"Amen," said La Clos, turning towards the door. "In a week's time I shall see you again; by that time matters will have thickened."

As soon as La Clos had taken his leave, Cleveland advanced from his hiding-place.

"What think you of the conversation you have just heard?"

"Shall I tell you what I think of yourself?" asked Cleveland.

"Do so."

"That you are the rashest and most incontinent conspirator that ever perished on a scaffold."

"I had only the choice of evils," answered Brisseau. "La Clos is the most suspicious of men. His distrust once excited is never laid. My schemes ran less risk of derangement from the introduction of a new confidant, than from

the alienation of the prominent actors. Suffering in your tenderest ties from the power of arbitrary imprisonment, I knew that you could not be otherwise than hostile to the government; besides, I wished you to see that I was something more than a journeyman printer; more than all this, I do not fear the police, for they can neither secure my person, nor interrupt my plans."

Cleveland felt no wish to refute these arguments. To convince a desperate and daring character, that the safety of his person and the success of his schemes depended upon his own discretion, would be an act of glaring and obvious impolicy. He assented, therefore, to the justice of Brisseau's remarks, and after announcing that he should call the next day, at the same hour, he took leave of his strange acquaintance.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A STRANGE CHARACTER DEVELOPED.

ON finding himself in the open street, Cleveland's first impulse was to seek the purlieus of the Bastille. He walked rapidly along, until the gloomy towers of that too celebrated prison, darkly defined against the moonlight, rose upon his sight. He advanced to the fosse, and gazed upon the massive walls and frowning battlements, which contained the object of his deepest attachment, with a strange and mingled emotion of

fury, bitterness, and delight. Within a stone's throw from where he stood, Antonia breathed, lived, and had her being. Yet he could not see her—speak to her—hear her voice—gaze upon her form—or convey to her the smallest intimation of his vicinity. By human intervention, that small space of ground, was converted into an impassable barrier between him and all that he held dear on earth. A single stone wall alone interposed, and yet more effectually separated him from his mistress, than if whole seas and continents had been placed between them.

Why had he come there? What pleasure did he receive? what profit did he gain by straining his eyes on the black towers of the Bastille? As far as the enjoyment of Antonia's presence and company was concerned, he might as well have been at the other end of France—at the other end of the world. What was the

subtle influence, that like a magnet drew him to the spot? What was the inexplicable attraction, that detained him for hours before the walls that encompassed his mistress? but it is useless to attempt an analysis of the sentiment. None but lovers—none but those who have deeply and truly loved—a class of mortals much fewer in number than the world supposes,—can understand why Cleveland remained in the vicinity of the fortress till the dawn. It is true, the incidents of the day afforded him ample food for reflection. Antonia's fate, the strange manner in which it was communicated, the extraordinary and mysterious character of Brisseau, the alarming confidence which had been thrust upon him without his own sanction or consent—all constituted matters of excitement and consideration; but passing over the latter topics, his thoughts recurred to Antonia—to the

possibility of recovering her. The event to the view of reason appeared remote and improbable, yet when Brisseau spoke of coming events which would effect her release, such was his extraordinary faculty of inspiring belief and confidence, that hope sprung up in Cleveland's mind in spite of himself. Certainly if a revolution were impending, which should seat the younger branch of the Bourbons on the throne, her deliverance was not far off; for Brisseau evidently took a strong interest in her welfare, and was too important a partizan to be refused such a trifling favour as her freedom. But was such a change of dynasty probable? The Duke of Orleans was a favourite with the people at present, because he opposed himself to the Court in politics; but Cleveland felt that he had neither energies to command respect, nor virtues to inspire sympathy, and that he

was as ill-calculated, as Louis himself, to long maintain the part of a popular leader. La Clos, with whose great talents he was well acquainted, had seemed to take the same view of his chief's character, and to deem him incapable of accomplishing the design he had so recklessly commenced. It was on Brisseau's own exertions that he chiefly relied, and so strong an opinion had he conceived of the inexhaustible resources and the consumnate audacity of that extraordinary personage;—so highly did he estimate the versatility and extent of his talents, that he thought him capable of bringing to pass apparent impossibilities.

Supposing then that Antonia should be again restored to him, upon what terms did he propose to live with her—upon what principles to regulate their future intercourse? Cleveland was neither fickle nor inconstant: no man was

better aware, that mutual fidelity is the essential condition to mutual affection, and that he who desires to be sincerely and truly loved, must direct his exclusive devotion to a single object. He was entirely free from the vulgar passion for variety which seems to haunt so many men. He looked upon this restless craving after new objects of desire, as evidence of an incapacity for enjoyment. He well knew, that such men leave all in turn, because they are unable to find with any the happiness they seek, and that their incessant love of change, is only a fruitless effort to escape from their own miserable satiety; just as invalids cause themselves to be transported from town to town, and from country to country, in the vain hope of discovering a climate, that will give to disease and irritation, the calm and placid vigour, that belongs to health alone. His hesitation, then, to unite

himself to Antonia, did not arise from any apprehension, that he should at a future period repent the union. Never since he had known her had his heart wandered a moment, though but in imagination. A cloud it is true had for a short time overshadowed his affection, but in the first hour of absence, it had burst forth again with its original warmth. He intensely felt all her beauty and excellence, and never attempted to supply the vacancy she had left in his bosom. Not marriage itself could surround him with stricter ties, than were already imposed upon him by his own inclinations. Why, then, did he hesitate to convert a covert and clandestine connexion into a permanent and legitimate union? What were the obstacles between him and happiness? The dread of the world's sneer. Antonia's birth was obscure and mysterious; the Duke de

Fronsac still lived to brand her as his runaway mistress; and, lastly, her intercourse with himself. Of this last article of accusation he soon disposed; it was cruel, it was ungenerous, to charge her with a fault which was partly owing to circumstances, and partly to his own conduct, which was committed in his own favour, and for his own sake. The other two unfortunate circumstances of her lot, might certainly expose her, and consequently himself, to much contumely and vexation. While he was totally ignorant of her parentage, he could never be secure but that the lowest and most degraded of mankind might start up, and claim her as his child; then her involuntary residence under the Duke's protection would be exposed to much misconstruction, and would render her an easy prey to calumny and misrepresentation. But these objections lost much of their weight, when

he recollected, that he was not a native of France; and that a repetition of his visit to that country was by no means essential either to his worldly prosperity, or his mental happiness. In England there would be few to question, and none to contradict, whatever account he might choose to give of his foreign wife; while the refined beauty of her person, and the natural elegance of her manners, would tend to lull any suspicions respecting her family. There, too, she would find a proper sphere of display for her many charms and virtues; and he confidently anticipated, that if she could be guarded against unfair prepossessions in the outset of her career, her intrinsic loveliness, both in mind and body, would soon be appreciated by society, and attract an universal tribute of admiration. We shall not farther pursue a description of his mental conflict. Suffice it to say, that the

struggles ended, as such always do, by the strongest impulse winning the victory over the other contending emotions, and then forcing poor reason to find arguments to justify the decision.

Another subject which engaged much of Cleveland's attention, was the conversation between Brisseau and La Clos, which he had involuntarily overheard on the previous evening. Parts of it were unintelligible to him; but he understood quite enough to make him aware that the parties had embarked on some dark and desperate scheme of rebellion, and might deservedly expect to be apprehended at any moment by the emissaries of government. He could have no guarantee, that such an arrest would not take place, whilst he was holding communication with Brisseau. Such an accident might implicate him in the guilt and danger of

the plot, and expose him to considerable embarrassment, before he could prove his innocence. With this conviction, it would have been insanity to have repeated his visit the next morning to Jean Brisseau. He contented himself with sending an unsigned, and undated note, in a feigned hand, to this effect: "That he was determined to take the first opportunity of uniting himself to the lady, in whom Monsieur Brisseau was so strongly interested."

If Cleveland had been asked, whether Brisseau's sanguine predictions had inspired him with the expectation of recovering Antonia, he would have denied the fact; yet it is certain that a vague, indefinite, yet powerful sentiment of hope, lurked in his breast, perhaps unknown to himself. It was strange, because we have seen that Cleveland was of a melancholy temperament, and he had many a time despaired,

under circumstances, which had held out probabilities of success much better founded, than the present. The secret of his faith lay in the character of Brisseau. This singular personage possessed, in an eminent degree, the peculiar talent of imperceptibly impressing all who approached him with a profound conviction of his extraordinary talents and resources. In every look and gesture there was a calm imposing assumption of power, which sooner or later prevailed over the strongest scepticism.

This unconscious reliance on Brisseau was naturally much increased, when intelligence of the first proceedings of the States General arrived in Paris. It was well known that this celebrated assembly consisted of deputies elected by the three orders in the state: the clergy, nobility, and bourgeoisie, or commonalty. The third estate sent twice as many representatives, as either of

the other two classes. In summoning the States General, the King and his advisers intended that they should vote according to orders; that is to say, that the representatives of each class should severally ascertain the opinions of their members, and then, that the majority of orders should decide the adoption or rejection of the measures under discussion. In this manner, the court, anticipating that the representatives of the privileged orders would generally adhere to the side of the government, expected to obtain a majority of orders, if not of the representatives; and trusted with confidence, that on most occasions of importance, the clergy and nobility would unite in resisting the innovations, and revolutionary tendencies of the third state. The popular leaders saw the importance of the point, and strenuously insisted, that the three orders should vote together; and that the gross

majority should constitute the decision of the assembly. It is not necessary to relate the details of this famous struggle, and the mode in which it ultimately terminated in favour of the popular party. When the result of the contest became known in Paris, Cleveland was struck by the remarkable coincidence between the predictions uttered by Brisseau, and La Clos, in their confidential conference, and the actual course of events; and he hardly knew which to admire most, the correctness of their political judgment, or the amazing extent of their private information. At this period, the future appeared bright and full of hope to Cleveland; not only did he rejoice, in common with all the generous and liberal spirits of the age, to see a great nation shaking off an odious system of despotism and vassalage, to which they had been for centuries subjected, but he had a deeper and

more personal interest in the struggle which was going on; he felt that great changes in the political system of the country were inevitable; and he foresaw, that amongst the first and most necessary of these alterations, would be a law securing the personal liberty of the subject against the tyranny of the executive, and effecting the discharge of all the state prisoners, who were at present confined under various frivolous pretexts in different parts of France. It now occurred to him, that it might be in anticipation of some such measure, that Brisseau had predicted the speedy release of Antonia; but suddenly the flattering prospect began to darken. The King, who had at present yielded to the wishes of the popular party, and used his personal influence with the representatives of the clergy and nobility, for the purpose of inducing them to accede to the system of voting proposed by the

third estate, now changed his course. In the royal sitting held on the twentieth of June, he openly avowed his intentions to retain the odious prerogatives of his ancestors, and forbid the representatives to exercise the functions of a legislative assembly. The absence, too, of the popular minister, Necker, on this occasion, was remarked, as an ominous circumstance. The exclusion of the deputies from their accustomed place of deliberation; their substitution of a neighbouring tennis court; the courageous and sublime oath which they swore, never to separate, until they had succeeded in obtaining a constitution for France, followed in rapid succession. These indications, on the part of the court, of a determination to get rid of the States General; and the firmness and energy, on the other hand, with which that body resisted the attacks made upon them, blighted the hopes, which Cleveland

had begun to entertain. The prospect of the peaceable enactment of such a law, as he had anticipated, was now far removed; and Antonia's deliverance must be expected from other means. In this state of anxiety and agitation, the only resource which suggested itself to his imagination, was a renewal of his acquaintance with Brisseau; and so eager did he become to acquire some well-founded information respecting the probable course of future events, that his former apprehensions of being implicated in that person's intrigues, were now quite overlooked.

A little after dusk, he repaired to the Rue Lesdiguières, and gave three distinct knocks at the door of the printing office; it was opened, as before, by a wire, which passed into another room. Cleveland walked in, and waited the requisite time; at last Brisseau made his appearance.

"Ha! Monsieur Cleveland," said he, with a polite bow, "I am delighted to see you; but what has induced you to venture once more into this den of rebellion, this cave of treason, this sink of sedition, from which you have of late so prudently kept away? Do not suppose you are not welcome, because I ask the question; I will confess that I am surprised at the visit; I did not expect to see you again."

"Your political prophecies, Monsieur Brisseau, have been accomplished with such singular correctness, that I could not resist my desire to hear you pronounce some fresh oracles on the same subject."

"Your new-born enthusiasm for politics," returned Brisseau, with an arch smile, "is very amusing; in other words, Sir Lover, you would know of me, if a certain bird will be able to burst her cage. I answer that she will; and

repeat what I formerly said, that coming events will release her. Are you satisfied?"

"I imagined," said Cleveland, "when you spoke of Mademoiselle di Volterra's speedy deliverance, you speculated on the probability, that the States General would abolish the use of lettres de cachet, and pass some law equivalent to the Habeas Corpus of the English, which would prevent in future the practice of arbitrary imprisonment, and bring about the release of those already imprisoned."

"You are the last man in the world, from whom I should have expected such Utopian ideas. Do you fancy, when a people are oppressed, they have nothing to do, but to point out to their governors the consequences of their despotic measures, and beg of them to desist? When a robber claps a pistol to your breast, and demands your money, or your life, do you

believe, he errs from a theoretical ignorance of the rights of property; and that a moral lecture will save your purse? Know, that history contains many prodigies, but no exception to this grand universal truth, that from the creation up to the present hour, governments have never conceded the smallest portion of reform to aught, save the actual, or threatened operation of physical force."

"And will the demonstration of the French be actual, or merely threatened?"

"Blood will flow in torrents; of that be certain: revolutions are not made of rose-water."

"But if your grand rule," said Cleveland, "be so universal, how was it that the King ever summoned the States General?"

"Because he and his advisers fancied in their folly, that the States General would prove a more pliable and efficacious instrument of taxa-

tion, than the Parliaments. He has now discovered his mistake; and has lost no time in attempting to get rid of them."

"Will he succeed, most illustrious prophet?"

"No!" answered Brisseau, "property, intelligence, and numbers, are on the popular side. If the King knew how far and wide the wish for change has spread—if he knew how deeply it is rooted in the hearts of his subjects, he would yield to what is inevitable. But who shall whisper truth into a monarch's ear?—who shall penetrate that mysterious and fatal circle of minions and intriguers who ever surround a king; governing him who appears to govern all; making him blind to the warning of impending fate; seizing for their own share the power, the profit, and the pleasure of tyranny, while they leave to the nominal tyrant its odium and responsibility."

"Then my law," said Cleveland, "is not likely to be passed, until the monarchy is destroyed."

"When the monarchy is ground to dust," said Brisseau, "do not be too sure of your law. There are other despots in the world besides those who wear a crown. A century may elapse, before France may be able to boast of such a bulwark of liberty as you allude to."

"Your vaticinations, except upon one point, are not encouraging."

"That is the only matter," returned Brisseau, "in which you are much interested at present."

"And you refuse to apprize me of the specific manner, in which the result, which is so devoutly wished for, is to be accomplished."

"You must not drive oracles to particulars—if every prophet were forced to specify the colour of his Messiah's hair, he could not long

retain his infallibility. I say, trust in me. Opportunities shall not escape you for want of notice; when the pear is ripe, I shall put you in the way to pluck it."

"We shall meet again then?"

"We shall," replied Brisseau. "But as we may perhaps meet under different auspices, and in a scene less suited to calm explanation, than the present, if you have any questions to put—difficulties to solve—or request to make, you had better seize the passing moment."

"No:" said Cleveland thoughtfully, "I have nothing farther to ask. Yet stay—gratify a curiosity, which, if impertinent, is at least natural. I see before me a man, dressed in the humble garb of a mechanic, possessed of marvellous, and apparently incompatible accomplishments: one day I am startled by his ventriloquism; the next, I am alarmed by his

treason. Compelled by fear of the police to live in a hole under ground, he continues to be informed of the most important state secrets: his conversation is one everlasting sneer at mankind, yet he chooses to take an incomprehensible, and causeless interest in an utter stranger. Living riddle, that you are, furnish me with your own solution—explain to me the mystery of yourself."

"Did you ever hear of Cagliostro?" asked Brisseau.

"Yes, often," replied Cleveland, "you allude to the famous charlatan and impostor."

"Why charlatan? why impostor?" scornfully exclaimed Brisseau; "because he duped a few individuals, whilst others cheated whole nations? Suppose that he sometimes tempted a miser to barter some of his loved metal for the hopes of alchemical gold;—grant he, now

and then, predicted to a roué, or gambler, the result which his own conduct made inevitable; what are these trifling cases of deception, compared with the wholesale impositions of those great men, whom the world delights to honour? Examine the lives of heroes, conquerors, prophets, statesmen, legislators, teachers, preachers, advocates, orators, and writers. Scan the voluminous records of all they have imagined, spoken, written, and acted — scrutinize the principles they brought into action, the false faiths and erroneous delusions which they engendered; the struggles of mind and matter which they headed and exasperated; the wars, massacres, persecutions, and controversies, which they stirred up—consider the whole amount of all this thought and action; and accurately calculate, how much was meant to serve the cause of truth and mankind, and how much to forward

selfish ends, and individual interests. Distinguish between what was intended to benefit and enlighten, and what was meant to dazzle and mystify.—Charlatan! Impostor! I throw back the epithets with scorn, and fix them on the brightest names consecrated to immortality."

"You admit then your identity with Cagliostro."

"That is one of the many parts," replied Brisseau, "which I have played in my time; it is now filled by another actor who is in Italy. I have abandoned the character for ever."

"But why not have adopted, in the outset of your career, one of these legal and social charlatanries, which you denounce? A fiftieth part of your wasted talents and activity, exerted in a legitimate direction, would have made you rich and famous; whereas——" Cleveland stopped, lest he should irritate the vanity of

the singular personage, whose character he was endeavouring to elucidate.

"Whereas I am now poor and infamous," rejoined Brisseau; "was not that what you were about to say? but I am wealthier than you imagine; and as for fame it was never my aim or object."

"May I ask what that is?" asked Cleveland.

"Pleasure—excitement—the gratification of a wild and ardent imagination, which dominates over my other faculties, and calls incessantly for strange events, variety of external impressions, and active operations on a fitting sphere; and which, when condemned by circumstances to an unnatural inaction, preys upon itself, and becomes my torture, instead of my delight."

"And to satisfy this vain, nameless, and indefinable desire," said Cleveland, "you committed all the pranks attributed to Count Cagliostro?"

"The end was quite worth the means; I grudged neither the trouble nor the risk. I have seen every hue and shade of many-coloured life. I have flitted through all the different grades of society, as caprice or interest prompted me. When tired of the refined but languid wit of the palace, I have sought relief in the coarse but hearty humour of the cabaret. Sometimes a noble, sometimes a trader; sometimes living in the crowd, and busying myself in the endless varieties of human character; sometimes burying myself in my laboratory, and tracing the mysteries of nature. By turns an artist, a mechanic, a juggler at a fair, a conjuror in a village, a quack-philosopher in the capital, I have inspired the beings, with whom I came in contact, with new motives of action, conducted their intrigues, held the thread of the plot in my hand, and profited by the denouement.

The ordinary events of my career have been romances; my every day existence a melodrama; and what between the excitement of extricating myself from peril, and the enjoyment of achieving success, I have escaped that mortal ennui—that weariness of existence—which has clung to you through life like a poison, and infected every source of pleasure."

"But why violate the established laws of society," observed Cleveland, "and wage war with your species?"

"Had I been born on the vantage grounds of hereditary rank and fortune; had my birth and connexion entitled me to struggle for the great prizes and high places of life, be assured I would never have descended from my natural eminence, to act the part of Count Cagliostro. But I was born the slave of labour; sentenced, by the sordid necessity of earning my daily

bread, to the doom of perpetual and unremitting toil. In my youth, an old gentleman, a customer to the artist to whom I was apprenticed, who was fond of promoting education, and diffusing what he called useful knowledge, took notice of my talents, and recommended me to perseverance and industry, as the surest way to greatness. In proof of this advice, he lent me a biographical account of all the celebrated men who had risen from obscurity and poverty to eminence. I drew from it an inference he little expected; I computed the space of time, over which the lives of these prosperous individuals extended; and I calculated the number of beings who had lived and died, where fortune originally placed them: and I found the chances to be ten millions to one against the rise of any particular individual. I rejected what you would term legitimate means with scorn and despair; and

since I could not untie the tight though invisible meshes of poverty, I boldly cut them."

"Are you fully aware of the chances of the perilous game you are playing? Society against a single individual—a myriad to a unit?"

"I have estimated them again, and again, with the most rigid arithmetic," said Brisseau gravely, "and taking my own peculiar personal qualities into the calculation, and making the necessary allowance, I find the hazard is not so great as you imagine."

Cleveland shook his head.

"Well, be the danger what it will," continued Brisseau, "I am prepared to meet it. When I can no longer live after my own will and fashion, I am content to die, but not to trail out a dull, laborious, mechanical existence, distinguished only from the machine, at, or with

which I work, by susceptibility to pain and envy."

A long pause ensued on both sides. Each seemed occupied by his own thoughts, and neither attempted to continue the conversation. At length Brisseau abruptly bade Cleveland adieu. The latter understood the hint, and immediately took his departure.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE BIRTH-DAY OF THE GREATEST EVENT IN MODERN HISTORY.

On the thirteenth of July, Paris was thunder-struck with the intelligence of Necker's dismissal on the preceding day. The elements of explosion had long been gathering in the metropolis; and this impolitic step on the part of the court, acted as a spark to kindle them. The populace broke into open insurrection.

Cleveland went out to collect news, of what was passing in the streets; and learnt, that the Hospital of the Invalids had been attacked, and

taken by a mob, who had plundered its vaults of 30,000 muskets, and a proportionable quantity of ammunition: Cleveland saw the serious consequences of this exploit, which not only inspired the insurgents with courage, and confidence in their own strength; but put into their hands the means of executing still more important enterprizes. On his return to his lodgings, he found the following note. "To-morrow will be enacted a grand popular melo-drama, in the Rue de St. Antoine, Place de la Bastille. If Monsieur Cleveland does not object to the smell of gunpowder, he is particularly requested, by his printing-house friend, to assist in the representation: Monsieur Brisseau is of opinion, that the denouement of the piece will be intensely interesting to Monsieur Cleveland." "The event," thought Cleveland, "which this extraordinary man predicted, and which I

thought so impossible, is actually on the eve of completion."

The next morning, Cleveland repaired to the Rue de St. Antoine, where the Bastille was situated; but, long before he arrived in sight of that fortress, his progress was obstructed by groups of people, who stood engaged in loud and fierce discussion, on each side of the street: most of them were armed with some formidable weapon,--a great number had muskets, of the same description as were used in the army; these were evidently the fruits of yesterday's attack upon the Invalids: some brandished, with furious gestures, a heterogeneous collection of such tools, and utensils, as might, upon occasion, serve as instruments of offence. Even the garde meuble, and the museums, had been plundered; and the antique weapons of other ages, after centuries of rusty inaction, were again applied to the

purposes, for which they were constructed. Here you might see a fellow, whose greasy locks, and blue jacket, betokened him to be a butcher, flourishing a gold-hilted ivory-handled Damascus sabre, the spoil of some crusader.—In another direction was a modern-looking printer, stalking along with the long lance used in the tournaments of the middle ages. Cleveland could not help stopping to look at one man, who had armed, or rather encumbered himself, with the immense two-handled sword, which was in vogue with some of the heroes of chivalry; so large that it required the force of both arms to wield it, and so long that it could only be worn from the shoulder. "Morbleu!" said the fellow, who was endeavouring to brandish his enormous sword with one hand; "I think there must have been giants in the old time, or else we have sadly fallen away in strength; this sword would tire

my arm in a quarter of an hour; I think I had better get an axe, like old Tournay.'

Meantime, Cleveland observed that the people, though violently excited, seemed to have no definite object, or common plan: the chief topic of their discourse was the infamous conduct of the Queen, and courtiers, in persuading the King to dismiss Necker; and the great object of their anxiety and dread, was the army encamped near Paris, under the command of Marshal Broglio. Some said, that the General was marching on Paris, with the intention of taking the City by storm, and allowing the soldiers two days' sack;—others avowed, that he would content himself with drawing lines of circumvallation round the metropolis, and starving it into submission;—others again, whose imaginations were more terrific, looked up every moment at the sky, in expectation of showers of

shells, and added, "they knew, from good authority, that Marshal Broglio had received secret orders to bombard Paris, in case he met with resistance." Two or three individuals, who seemed particularly busy, ran about shouting, "Attack the Bastille!" How such a step afforded any protection against the dangers threatened by Marshal Broglio, they did not condescend to explain.

Still pushing his way through the crowd, Cleveland at last arrived in sight of the Bastille, and seeing a large mass of people collected round the outer draw-bridge of the fort, made his way up to them: he descried Brisseau in the centre, apparently engaged in a warm altercation with some well-dressed individuals, who were endeavouring to dissuade the surrounding mob from adopting violent measures.

Cleveland had not been in his present posi-

tion long, before Brisseau's quick eye, darting round the multitude, fell upon him: the latter could not leave his place; but he indicated his consciousness of Cleveland's presence, by a slight nod of recognition.

"Listen to a little reason, my countrymen;" said De la Rosière, a member of the old parliament of Paris, which had acquired a great, and deserved popularity, from the prominent part he had taken, in the grand struggle with the royal authority, which preceded, and, indeed produced, the convocation of the States General. "Listen to reason. I asked, why you congregated together with shouts and weapons? you tell me, because you are alarmed at the supposed designs of Marshal Broglio. I ask you, whom, and what, you are going to attack with these weapons? you answer, the Bastille; but, if you level the Bastille with the dust; how will the

destruction of that building enable you to resist Broglio's forces?"

"If we destroy the enemies of liberty, within the City," replied Brisseau, "we shall be the better able to cope with those without."

"Down with the Bastille!" cried a voice in the crowd; "it is the stronghold of tyranny and oppression!"—"It is the citadel of despotism!" shouted another.

"Yes! yes!" responded the circle round Brisseau and De la Rosière; "nobody can deny that—"

"It is a prison," exclaimed a pale young man, with long dishevelled hair, "where the friends of liberty are starved to death, while their oppressors wallow in luxury at Versailles."

This last observation seemed a home-thrust to the surrounding crowd: it roused their fury to the utmost; and a thousand voices, hoarse

with passion, began to repeat, "Down with the prison of liberty,—tear down the detested jail."

At length, an interval of silence occurred in the human storm. La Rosière made an unlucky use of the opportunity thus afforded him to speak: "Surely my friends," cried he, with a cool sarcastic smile, "you do not intend, because you are the friends of liberty, to pull down all the prisons in Paris? the freest countries in the world must have strong places, in which the wrong doers, and violators of the law, may be confined."

"La Rosière!" shouted the pale young man with streaming locks, "you are a traitor!"

"He has sold himself to the Court!" exclaimed one of the crowd.

An outrageous calumny is sure not to be allowed to drop for want of evidence.

"I can bear witness," cried a shoeblack,

coming forwards, " that his wife, Madame de la Rosière, received on the fifteenth of last month a hundred thousand livres from the Queen."

" Tear the traitor in pieces !" hallooed the crowd.

" Hang him with the lamp cords," cried some pestilent fellow, suggesting for the first time a cry which afterwards became so fatally common.

Already one ruffian had collared Monsieur de la Rosière, when Brisseau was heard loud above the tumult.

" Do not let us quarrel among ourselves," said he; " we have enemies enough to employ all our attention and force. Monsieur de la Rosière is not a traitor; he is honest but mistaken; I will convince him of his error. Monsieur de la Rosière," cried he, turning to that

gentleman, who by vigorous efforts had disengaged himself from his assailant, "you call the Bastille a prison; and you say that prisons are necessary even in lands which enjoy the greatest freedom.—Granted. But lay your hand upon your heart, and answer me truly and candidly this question. Is the Bastille a prison erected merely for the detention of prisoners, or a fortress built in the heart of Paris for the purpose of overawing the city? If it be simply a jail, why do yonder battlements bristle with loaded cannon pointed against the street? Why were immense quantities of powder secretly introduced last night into the fort? In your heart do you believe all these preparations are directed against a score of miserable fettered captives, or against the good citizens of Paris?"

La Rosière's answer was lost in the tremendous yell by which the surrounding auditors

signified their conviction of the orator's inference. When he could obtain a hearing, he was understood to admit, that the spectacle of the loaded cannon might justly cause apprehensions in the minds of the citizens, considering the uneasy nature of the times.

"I still," continued he, "disclaim my belief in the supposed hostile intentions of the governor of the Bastille. But to prevent any farther jealousies or terrors, and to convince you that I am unchanged in my good wishes for popular liberty, I will head a deputation to Monsieur De Launey, and demand of him that the cannon be removed from the platform."

The populace, who are always delighted with a new idea, shouted applause. Two respectably dressed individuals (for the mob, before, at least, they have arrived at the last stage of revolutionary madness, always like to be represented

by folks better attired than themselves) were selected at random from the crowd, and requested to accompany La Rosière in his mission. One of the two persons chosen stood aghast and silent at the honour thus conferred upon him; as if he did not dare to disappoint the wishes of the crowd by a refusal, and yet felt himself wanting in courage to execute the task which had devolved on him.

"What ails you, Monsieur Dupré?" said one of the crowd; "you don't seem to half like your present office."

"Why if anybody here—any adventurous young man," tremulously replied Monsieur Dupré, "who might wish to see the inside of the Bastille—I've no curiosity myself—would like to take my place, he is welcome to do so—that's all. I'm afraid I'm not exactly the proper person for this sort of business."

"Business!" returned the other; "you have nothing to do, but to walk over the drawbridge, and go into the Governor's house; that is a very easy matter, is it not?" When you are there, La Rosière will speak for the party."

"Doubtless," returned Monsieur Dupré, with a rueful smile; "it is a very easy matter to go into the Governor's house. My only fear is, that there may be some difficulty in getting out again."

The crowd laughed at Monsieur Dupré's shrewd conjecture; but La Rosière, who had heard this dialogue, came forward, and said, "I confess I entertain no fears on my own account. Monsieur De Launey, the Governor of the Bastille, is still a Frenchman; and I would trust myself to his honour; but since my worthy colleague surmises that we may be detained contrary to good faith, let us stipulate,

that four officers of the garrison should come out of the Bastille as we go in, and remain as hostages to this assembly until the return of their representatives."

Again the crowd applauded. Monsieur de La Rosière's proposals were communicated to one of the sentinels at the drawbridge, who forthwith reported them to the Governor. He soon returned to his post, bearing Monsieur De Launay's consent, and accompanied by four subaltern officers. The drawbridge was lowered. The four officers crossed it, and shook hands with the populace, as they came among them. La Rosière and his two colleagues entered the fortress, and the drawbridge was again drawn up.

The people waited a quarter of an hour with exemplary patience; at the expiration of this enormous period of time, they began to suspect

that their deputies had fallen victims to De Launey's treachery, and to moot the propriety of putting the hostages to death. In five minutes more they proceeded to blows and insults; and it would have gone hard with these unfortunate men, if La Rosière had not thrust his head from a window in one of the towers, and assured them of his safety. In another quarter of an hour, La Rosière and his companions made their appearance, and the four subalterns returned to the Bastille, nothing loth to escape from the wild hands in whose custody they had been placed.

The Governor's answer to the deputation was, that the cannon complained of had always been placed in their present position; that he was not authorized to remove them altogether without an order from the King; but as the spectacle alarmed the Parisians assembled out

side, he would remove the obnoxious pieces out of sight.

In fact, shortly after La Rosière's return, the cannon were pulled a little back, so as to conceal them from the view of the spectators beneath. The populace, who imagined their point gained, hurrahed with exultation, and La Rosière, elate with his pacific triumph, made the best of his way home.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE ATTACK.

The deputation had not produced the result which Brisseau had confidently expected, viz. that a flat refusal would have been returned, which would have roused the people to the highest pitch of fury. Though somewhat disconcerted at the tranquillizing effect of the Governor's message, he determined to make an effort to revive the popular indignation against the Bastille.

"My friends," said he, in a voice the loud-

ness and power of which seemed almost supernatural, "you must be very good-natured to take the Governor's answer in satisfaction of your just and reasonable demands. You insisted upon the removal of the cannon; and lo! he has dragged them back six inches: but when Broglio sends him orders to fire on his countrymen, pray, how many seconds will it take to push the murderous tubes forwards to their old places? He treats you, as a nurse does a child, who cries at the sight of the rod: she puts it behind her back, and the infant is pacified; although the rod remains as ready for use when wanted, as the cannon, that lurk in ambush behind yonder treacherous ramparts: but you adult Frenchmen—grown up Parisians—are you childish enough to be the dupes of such an old woman's trick?"

These few words acted like a firebrand on

the inflammable tempers of the mob. First arose an ominous buzz of discussion, a low deep sound, something between a hiss and a groan, which deepened and then slackened like the first fitful murmurs of an approaching storm. Gradually gaining strength, it became universal throughout the whole extent of the crowd, and at last burst upon the ear like the awful roar of a full formed hurricane. The multitude was agitated like a sea—the dark surface of human heads heaved, and worked to and fro, until its vast undulations imitated the huge swell of the ocean. Arms began to flash among the crowd —swords were brandished; the glittering tubes of muskets were protruded from the moving mass. Suddenly some desperate spirit levelled his musket at the battlements of the Bastille, and fired—a shout, that seemed to shake both heaven and earth, proclaimed the exultation of

the multitude at this first act of overt hostility. A thousand muskets were pointed in the same direction, and a tremendous volley was discharged at the ramparts. The leaden shower rattled against the massive walls of the old fortress, as vainly as hailstones. Its only effect was to drive from the ramparts, such of the garrison as were gazing on the multitude below. They quickly withdrew themselves from the range of their assailants' guns; and the lately crowded walls and towers presented not a trace of human life; save that now and then, a head slowly and cautiously raised itself above the battlements. In a moment the adventurous poll became a target for a thousand muskets, and it was withdrawn with much greater speed than it was put forward.

A short description of the Bastille is necessary, to enable the reader to comprehend the

nature of the attack which followed. This celebrated fort, or prison, was nearly of an oblong shape. Each corner terminated in a tower, and each side was also inlet, as it were, with two towers, placed at equal distances from each other. This part of the Bastille, which might be considered as the citadel, was surrounded by a deep ditch or fosse, on the outside of which, and joined by a causeway and drawbridge, stood, in a large open court, the governor's house, the guard-house of the garrison, and other offices connected with the Bastille. These external buildings adjoined the street, but the avenue of the entrance which led to them, was defended by a drawbridge and a branch ditch. The garrison of this important place consisted of two troops of Swiss and a small force of Invalids!

While the mob were maintaining a harmless fire against the walls of the Bastille, which

did not provoke even a single shot from its defenders, a much more effectual attack was made upon the outer drawbride by two daring individuals; one a discharged soldier, named Louis Tourney; the other was never known, and most probably perished in the subsequent conflict. These courageous men entered a perfumer's shop, which adjoined the guard-house, and from thence climbed over the roof of the latter building, and got behind the drawbridge. Meeting with no interruption from the garrison, who had all retired into the interior of the Bastille, they began to hack and cut away with their hatchets the fastenings of the iron chains, which held up the great drawbridge. At first, from the noise, confusion, and smoke, which prevailed, they were not perceived by the garrison in the citadel. When they espied their operations, and saw their intentions, they hallooed out to those daring

assailants to desist on pain of being instantly fired on. These threats only redoubled the exertions of Tourney and his companion. The fear of death lent supernatural vigour to their brawny arms. Again the Swiss, with dreadful threats and levelled muskets, denounced instant destruction to them, if they persisted—quicker and louder fell their desperate strokes. Compelled by the obstinacy of Tourney and his companion, the garrison at length overcame their reluctance to fire. Two or three shots were discharged from the tower, but without effect,—the assailants' efforts amounted to agony.

The bridge begins to tremble and shake—another shot—another blow—the last hasp is cut away—down falls the bridge! With a scream of exultation and surprise, the crowd swept across it, like a pent-up torrent when it bursts its bounds,—filled the guard-house—filled the

government mansion—filled the court in front of it. In a moment a furious attack was made on the second drawbridge. The garrison, now seriously alarmed, and irritated at the result of their former forbearance, began to pour a deadly and destructive fire of musquetry from the battlements, and more especially from the loopholes in the walls. Every shot told on the densely crowded mass. Each bullet, like a stone thrown into a china shop, did its work of destruction. Aghast to find themselves falling on every side, and mowed down in files, like the thick grass under the scythe of the mower, the terrified people made a simultaneous push backwards, and in half a minute the court was completely cleared of all but the wounded and slaughtered wretches who were prostrated by the discharge. Many of the mob rushed panic-struck across the drawbridge, and could

hardly deem themselves safe at the distance of a couple of streets. Others there were of bolder temperament, who retreated indeed from the open court, but took up their position behind the angle of some sheltering wall, or within the governor's house, and from thence maintained an irregular and dropping fire against the defenders of the fort. Encouraged by their example, most of the fugitives regained their courage, and crept into the governor's mansion and the guard-house, which they immediately began to pillage. Cleveland was not far distant from the drawbridge when it first fell, and was carried away by the pressure of the mob. Finding resistance impossible, he yielded to the human current, and passed the bridge into the court; here he was fortunate enough to escape the effects of the volley which was discharged from the Bastille. Like every other occupant,

Cleveland felt the imperative necessity of flight; but retaining more presence of mind than the majority, he deemed it sufficient to retreat beneath the angle of a wall, which afforded him refuge from the shot. Here the celerity with which he took up his position, brought him in rather rough contact with an individual who had already betaken himself to the same shelter. As the smoke cleared away, he recognized Brisseau.

"Ha!" said the latter; "this is brave sport—merry sport is it not? It makes one's blood circulate——"

"Humph!" answered Cleveland; "you had better ask the wounded wretches who are writhing in that court; their gore, at least, is flowing at a handsome rate."

"Poor devils!" said the other, coolly. "But, after all, what better use can they put their

lives to? It's their own cause, and that of liberty; can the soldier say as much? Die they must at some time; and the sick-bed has its pangs as well as yonder court. In five minutes, few of them will be able to feel the difference between that pavement, and a couch of down."

"A truce, for God's sake," exclaimed Cleveland, "to this unseasonable moralizing. How many have fallen, think you?"

"Some twenty or thirty," said Brisseau. "I thought the sluggish dogs of the garrison were not going to fire at all, and would let us climb over the walls without interruption: but, pardieu! when they once began, they made up for lost time, and peppered us to some purpose."

"You will never take the Bastille," observed Cleveland, despondingly. "To keep firing at walls, ten feet thick, with musquet balls, is mere waste of powder and lead."

"As the generality of my friends," replied Brisseau, "had the economy to steal both their weapons and ammunition, they can afford to be liberal in their use."

"Is, then, your enterprize," said Cleveland, "from which you led me to expect so much, to terminate in pillaging the outer works of the Bastille, and discharging a few harmless shot against its walls?"

"Not so," returned Brisseau; "the Bastille has a weak side, which you do not dream of."

"My eyes are certainly not adequate to the discovery. Pray point it out. Where is it?"

"In the cowardice and incapacity of its Governor," answered Brisseau; "which exposes it to greater danger, than a six-yard breach in its thickest bulwark. The noise of our musquets will sooner or later frighten him into surrendering."

"And supposing," pursued Cleveland, "that you are deceived in this notable expectation, have you other means of storming the fort?"

"Yes," replied Brisseau. "A large portion of the French guards have promised to join us, if they can escape from their barracks. They will bring some artillery with them; my grand object is to keep my amateurs here, until my professional gentlemen arrive."

At this moment a fresh crowd of people, preceded by a large flag, advanced, evidently for the purpose of holding a parley with the fort. When Brisseau observed them, he said to Cleveland, "I must disconcert their negociations, for a compromise will suit neither of us. We must have possession of the fort, and nothing less."

The body of people, alluded to, advanced into the court; and the garrison, conjecturing their intentions, grounded their arms, and made

signs that they would not fire. The deputation halted. At this critical period, Brisseau, who had, while talking to Cleveland, reloaded his piece, crept round the corner, and discharged it over the heads of the deputation, in the direction of the drawbridge. The garrison, who thought that the shot proceeded from the body of people who carried the flag of truce, were enraged at the bad faith of the pretended peacemakers, and fired upon them. Alarmed to find themselves between two fires, the unlucky deputation, instead of holding a parley, discharged their musquets at the fort, and then took to their heels.

The conflict proceeded, but with diminished vigour on the part of the populace. The garrison now fired without mercy on all within the range of their guns; while the people could but ineffectually return the attack on men who only

showed their heads and shoulders for a moment above the wall. To shelter themselves from the shot of their adversaries, the mob bethought themselves of a very silly expedient. Three waggons, loaded with straw, were drawn into the court, and set on fire. The thick white smoke entirely hid both the Bastille and its assailants and suspended for some time the firing.

"Morbleu! Elie," said Brisseau, to an individual attired in old regimentals; "whose work is this?"

"Not mine, certainly," replied the other, shrugging his shoulders; "what we can gain by smoke-drying ourselves like salted fish, God only knows."

"Hark, my friend," said Brisseau, to a man who was active in bringing the waggons, "what's the object of this bonfire?"

"To hide us," said the man.

"Ah! but it hides the Bastille also, my friend."

"The smoke will annoy the garrison."

"Not so much, as it will us."

The conflagration had become so fierce, that it was impossible to remove the flaming vehicles, which were therefore allowed to burn themselves out.

While the whole scene was thus enveloped in a dense covering of smoke, the besieged took the opportunity to discharge a cannon loaded with grape-shot, which produced sad havoc amongst the crowd. It is remarkable, that this was the only occasion, during the whole attack, in which the garrison resorted to the use of their artillery. The cause of this circumstance has never been fully explained: it seems, however, that the garrison could not work the cannon on the battlements, without exposing themselves to the incessant

shower of bullets from their assailants, and that on this account, they confined their defence to musketry. Stretching themselves at full length on the platform, they could gently raise their small arms over the battlements, in the direction of the crowd, and fire with perfect impunity, while the latter could not retaliate with the smallest chance of success. It must be recollected, that though the walls of the Bastille were lofty, when measured from their foundation, yet, that the great depth of the ditch in which the fort was built, did not permit the ramparts to rise any considerable height above the level of the surrounding streets.

At length, a shout of exultation from the mob, proclaimed the arrival of new and powerful assistance. A troop of French Guards had burst from their barracks, and hastened to co-operate with their unmilitary countrymen, in the glori-

ous task of storming the Bastille. They brought with them two pieces of ordinary artillery; an antique cannon, beautifully embossed with silver, which they had taken from the Garde-meuble, and a mortar. With this meagre battering train, they fell to work with considerable skill, and bravery. The pieces were pointed against the posts, and chains, of the second drawbridge, in the hopes of bringing it down, like the first, and were served with rapidity and precision.

The scene was more animated and terrific, than it yet had been.—The flashes of the artillery showed dull and red in the radiance of the afternoon sun: but the deep booming of the cannon—the sharp irregular reports of the musquetry—the groans of the wounded—the hurry—the agony—the confusion—the oaths—imprecations, entreaties,—above all, the wild rushing, and universal shout of exultation, which rose, from every

member of the infuriated multitude, and in which the roaring of the artillery was almost lost, formed a combination of sounds and noises, well calculated to deprive the mind of all tranquil thought, and to plunge it into a state of temporary delirium. Even Cleveland, preoccupied as he was, by other absorbing feelings, could not withstand the infectious excitement of the spectacle. He forgot the object which brought him there.—He forgot Antonia for the moment; so engrossed was he, by the fearful sights and sounds which pressed upon his senses; when the heavy tap of Brisseau's hand upon his shoulder, arrested his attention; and he heard that individual inquire, in a calm, cold, unaltered voice; "What he now thought of the people's chance of success?" It struck him, even at the moment, as something frightful, and unnatural that any human being should be able to preserve his

habitual calm, and composure, amid such an overpowering scene.

By a strong mental effort Cleveland sufficiently recalled his mental powers, to enable him to reply, and he said, "I think you may now destroy both drawbridges, and gate, and then cross the ditch on planks; bnt, doubtless they have planted cannon behind, which sweep the entrance, so you will not take the fort, without the most tremendous loss."

"True," answered Brisseau, "if the garrison were determined to defend themselves to the last gasp; but I have reason to know, they are luke-warm in the cause. De Launey neither commands their respect, nor their love. I marvel, they have not compelled him to surrender before this."

"And what," inquired Cleveland anxiously, "will become of the prisoners? will the mob liberate them at once, and dismiss them?"

" God only knows," replied Brisseau, in the same composed tone, which he had used throughout the colloquy, "God only knows what these multitudinous kings of an hour may take into their victorious noddles. Perhaps, they will deliver the captives up to the civil power, to show their magnanimous respect for law and order: but do not be uneasy," added he, producing a key, "here are royal letters of dismissal; I have cared for that. Keep close to me—Antonia's cell is second in the tower. I will take the liberty to open it, whether their Majesties, the populace, like it, or not."

" Thank God!" exclaimed Cleveland, " but tell me——"

" What noise is that?" cried Brisseau, with a slight appearance of excitement. " Do you not hear a drum beating a retreat; and see——look, an Invalid is displaying a white flag. By heavens! we have won the game. Leave off

firing, my friends," shouted he, with a voice like a trumpet, " the garrison has surrendered !"

This appeal was heard, and obeyed in his immediate vicinity; but the firing still continued in front of the crowd. At length, however, the foremost assailants distinguished a voice speaking from behind the drawbridge. Their fire slackened, a partial silence was obtained, and a pause, which strangely contrasted with the din of the past moment, ensued; and the voice was heard: " We will surrender on condition that we are allowed to march out with the honours of war."

An indignant and contemptuous negative simultaneously burst from the crowd. The firing, and the confused din of the assault immediately recommenced. At this moment, a letter was protruded on the point of a bayonet through a loop-hole in the shut-up bridge.

"Read it! read it!" shouted the assailants. The firing again dropped; a plank was procured, and stretched across the ditch. An adventurous individual advanced, and walked boldly along the perilous bridge, but his success was not equal to his courage. He tottered, and fell into the ditch, where he remained senseless. A dozen of the assailants on the causeway struggled for the dangerous honour of fetching the capitulation. One wore regimentals.

"Let Elie go! he has a uniform!" cried the spectators. The individual alluded to was a half-pay ensign in the Queen's regiment, who had been one of the most active leaders of the populace. He stepped with a collected and undaunted air on the plank, and though the frail support bent and quivered under him, like a reed, his firm nerves sustained the trial. He took the paper off the bayonet, recrossed the

plank, and read the note. It was a capitulation, in which the garrison proposed to surrender on condition that their lives should be spared; it concluded by saying: "If you do not accept our capitulation, we have twenty thousand barrels of gunpowder in the towers, and we will blow ourselves, the fort, and the neighbourhood, into the air."

"I accept the capitulation," shouted Elie, waving the paper, "in the name of the French people."

The drawbridge was lowered—the crowd rushed over it in shoals. Brisseau, who had seen, though not heard, the whole transaction from the back of the court, observed to Cleveland, "Elie's old uniform has won us this surrender. They think, they can trust the mob if led by a French officer; but some of them, I suspect, will learn to their cost, that the leader

of a mob is not its commander. Now let us push on, and if possible keep together."

Having elbowed their way over the bridge, they at last gained the interior of the fort, where a dreadful scene of confusion presented itself. A large portion of the mob were anxious to massacre the garrison, on the plea that no faith should be kept with the enemies of liberty; but their military allies stoutly opposed themselves to this proposition. Their professional feelings on the subject of quarter, and observing terms, overcame even the excitement of the hour, and the fury of their new-born political zeal. A victorious mob are always cruel, because they never intend to fight again; but the old soldier, whose business is war, knows, that the fugitive of to-day may be the conqueror of to-morrow, and shows mercy to others, in order that they may one day show it to him. But no inter-

ference could protect the Governor, and the superior officers. In vain Huin,* one of the bravest leaders of the multitude, endeavoured to cover him with his own body; the ferocious mob would not relinquish their prey, and literally tore him to pieces.

It is singular, that when the popular liberators found themselves in possession of the keys of the Bastille, they were so elated and engrossed with their triumph, that they instantly set off to deposit their prize at the Hôtel-de-Ville, quite forgetting, in the meantime, to unlock the prison doors of the captives they came to disenthral. So easily do the mass, when engaged in a conflict, lose all care or memory of what they are fighting about.

* Afterwards a general under Napoleon. In the affair of Mallet, he was the first person who stopped the progress of that extraordinary plot.

The lower part of the rabble had already betaken themselves to plunder. Forcing themselves with difficulty through the crowd, Brisseau and Cleveland hastened to the Bazinière tower. Unhappily their eager looks had attracted the attention of one of the plundering party, who judging that they were in pursuit of some extraordinarily precious booty, determined to follow them. A bottle of the Governor's wine which he had imbibed, had whetted his bloody-thirsty and avaricious propensities, without depriving him of the power to do mischief. With rapid steps, Brisseau and his companion mounted the tower, unconscious of their follower, who kept close behind. They reached the third story, Brisseau tore the key from his pocket, and dashed it into the lock—turned it—threw open the door. Two female figures were in the room; one of them threw herself before the other.

"Death to De Launey's daughter," cried a voice behind.

Cleveland, and Brisseau, who was armed with a cutlass, rapidly turned round — the half drunken ruffian had dropped upon his knee, and his musket was levelled.

Up rose Brisseau's weapon on high, and descended with the velocity of a flash of lightning——it was too late to prevent the discharge of the musket; but it totally clove the head of the wretch, who fired it, in twain—the ruffian died without a groan. Flinging down his sword, Brisseau darted through the smoke, and kneeling down, raised the unfortunate victim of this wanton murder from the ground, where she had sunk. It was no other than the Marchioness de Montolieu, who had received in her own breast, the ball most probably destined for her daughter.

Cleveland rushed forward, and clasped the other female, who was Antonia, in a long embrace.

"Oh Cleveland! dearest Cleveland!" shrieked Antonia, "aid my mother."

He turned to her wounded companion, and beheld, with astonishment, Brisseau straining the bleeding lady to his breast, with looks of unutterable tenderness and grief. While he gently supported her with one arm, with the other he tore off his neckcloth, and fragments of his linen, to staunch the crimson stream, which flowed in fatal profusion over her beautiful bosom.

"Marchioness—Erminia—" gasped the mob leader with frantic emotion. "Look up—revive—this is the hour of liberation—victory—and triumph—You are free—"

Roused by this appeal, the dying Mar-

chioness opened her eyes, "free?" repeated she feebly, "who says that I am free? Ah Cagliostro — thanks dearest friend — a thousand thanks for your kindness and services—I die—but not unconscious of them—save Antonia—save my daughter—Antonia—"

"I am here my mother," answered the weeping Antonia.

"I hear your voice, but I cannot see you, this cell is so dark. Forgive me dearest child."

Here, Antonia, whose health and strength had been much affected by the late confinement of her life, sunk under the agony of the spectacle, and fell senseless into Cleveland's arms.

Life fleeted fast from the wounded Marchioness; already her soft lustrous eyes were glazed by the films of death, and her fair head drooped in utter lifelessness over Brisseau's arm. Yet still the last remains of vitality which

lingered in her brain, continued to repeat the idea which had predominated there during life, and she murmured in low faltering tones, " Antonia—save her—save her, Cagliostro, my beloved Cagliostro, for my sake."

Cagliostro drew his hand from the wound. The red stream of life no longer issued forth; he placed his hand upon her heart—it had ceased to beat.

" Shall I go, and procure medical assistance?" asked Cleveland, hardly knowing what he said.

Brisseau heard him not—his whole soul was absorbed in the unconscious form, which he vainly pressed against his own.

Cleveland repeated his question.

" For what purpose?" answered Brisseau, in the dry husky tones of despair; " no—no—all the quacks and drugs in Christendom will never make her smile again—she is dead, as certainly

as I am alive—alive for vengeance. Leave us, or rather me; for she is nothing now. Leave me, sir, I entreat you—look to your living charge, happy man,—and leave me with the dead! Go, go—I insist, I entreat you."

Cleveland saw his presence only exasperated his comrade's agony. He felt that his own lovely burthen required attention and assistance. Stripping off the cloak and red cap of the slaughtered ruffian, who was still lying on the floor, he placed them on Antonia, and, leaving the sad scene within the cell, slowly and cautiously descended the tower stairs. The interior of the Bastille he found in the same state of uproar and agitation in which he had left it. The crowd offered him no opposition but what was naturally caused by their numbers and confusion. Nobody seemed inclined to dispute the task of assisting a wounded fellow-creature:

purely charitable offices have seldom many competitors. Hugging his precious burthen to his heart, Cleveland crossed the bridge in triumph. The way was now comparatively clear, although still densely crowded.

A fiacre presented itself, which he instantly engaged. In the vehicle Antonia recovered her consciousness. There is reason to think that she had recovered it before, but did not care to manifest the fact. Perhaps, after long absence, she felt it sweet to be borne along on the bosom she loved, and did not wish to disturb a situation which was not without its charms.

Cleveland gazed on the lovely being with looks of unutterable content, and straining her yielding, unresisting, form to his heart, he murmured in a broken voice: "Once more mine: Antonia, we will never part; let us swear it. Dearest, dearest, is this reality? Clasp my

hand to convince me that I am not dreaming—my happiness feels almost too great to be *true*."

Antonia did not speak; she tenderly encircled her lover's hand in her soft and fairy fingers, whose eloquent and thrilling pressure assured him of all that words could never yet express. Her cheek reclined on his bosom; it was a moment of boundless rapture—one of those redeeming minutes which console us for the long heavy hours of our common ordinary existence. Oh! those faint delicious throbs, which excite the heart, until life seems as if it would sink under excess of enjoyment, and we can hardly distinguish the agony of pleasure from pain. Brief but intense instants! which we can hardly support in the passage, yet when once passed, we would give worlds to recall.

Oh fortune! give me back the happy time

when I was a lover, and I will pay for the few short hours with years of gratified ambition!

"Can you guess whither I am taking you?" asked Cleveland.

"I know not—I care not," replied Antonia, "I am with you, and that is sufficient—I am content—I have no fears for myself—it is for my mother, that I am anxious. It is hard to say in the first joy of our meeting—leave me; but pray tell me where my mother is."

"Alas! my beloved," returned Cleveland, "the unhappy lady whom you call mother, is beyond the reach of human assistance."

Antonia's eyes began to fill afresh at the announcement of this calamity, but Cleveland kissed away her tears, and sympathized in her sorrow with such deep tenderness, that Antonia could not refuse to be comforted. And the blow, which falling on her at another time,

would have prostrated her in the dust, was now borne with temperate sorrow.

The next day found Cleveland and Antonia engaged in the delightful task of mutual explanation. They had a thousand hopes to communicate—a thousand feelings to unfold—a thousand misapprehensions to clear up. Hour after hour flew unconsciously away, while each sat listening to the other, indulging in that charming egotism, so delightful to wooers, and so tiresome to everybody else; when their conversation was interrupted by the sound of a violent affray in the street. Cleveland went to the window, and beheld a spectacle which rivetted him to the spot. A coronetted carriage, which he immediately recognized to be the Duke de Fronsac's, was surrounded by a huge collection of the lowest rabble, who seemed bent on obstructing the progress of the vehicle, and insisted

that its owner should descend and submit to be searched. The haughty noble inside, who was no other than the Duke de Fronsac, without deigning to answer the popular suspicions, or to soothe the irritation of the mob, shouted, in a tone of the loftiest contempt, reiterated orders to the coachman to proceed.

The coachman, who saw the impossibility of making any farther progress, without driving over the already exasperated mob, turned round to his master, and suggested in a low tone the prudence of yielding to the requisitions of the people. This appeal only inflamed the Duke's indignation. "Drive on, François," exclaimed he, "I command you, drive on, coward—at your peril dare to hesitate."

The coachman gave his horses a furious lash. The high-spirited animals reared, sprang forward, and trampled in the dust two or three

individuals, who were attempting to hold their heads. At this moment, a savage wretch plunged the blade of a cane sword in the side of the near horse. The poor animal sunk on the pavement. The mob seemed excited, like tigers, at the sight of blood; and the most horrid cries and imprecations burst from them. "Open the door—tear him out; he is carrying intelligence to Broglio. It is easier to bring him to justice now, than when he is at the head of his regiment. To the lamp with him. Let us see the colour of the aristocrat's heart! Trample him to pieces!"

Unfortunately for himself, the Duc de Fronsac entertained a very ridiculous opinion respecting the cowardice of the common people. Accustomed to see his inferiors and dependents tremble in his presence, he forgot that the timidity of such men proceeded from moral

baseness rather than from animal fear; and that this moral baseness was nothing more than a repetition, on a lower and coarser scale, of the servility which he himself displayed at court. He fancied that an enraged mob would take to their heels at the sight of a pistol.

"Pierre—François!" cried the Duke, almost hoarse with fury; "use your weapons—stand by me. Give back, scoundrel!" said the Duke, to a ruffian who opened the carriage and pulled down the steps. "The first who mounts that step is a dead man."

Two sturdy ruffians instantly answered the menace by springing into the carriage. The Duke was as good as his word—he fired. An assailant fell back mortally wounded. His comrade threw him under the wheels, and repeated his attempt. The second assailant succeeded in grappling with the Duke, and prevented him

from drawing forth his other pistol. The wretched nobleman was dragged from his carriage, and exposed to the full fury of a merciless mob. They flew upon him, like a pack of wild wolves upon a single dog; they dragged him through the kennel, then raised him in their arms. They tore him to fragments with their fingers,—limb was twisted from limb; and though a hundred deadly weapons were directed against him, such was the blind ferocity of the murderers, that not a single blow took full effect.

The whole scene passed in a much shorter time than is requisite for its description. Cleveland, who had at first regarded the affair as a mere ebullition of public disgust against an unpopular individual, which would end in a few handfuls of mud being thrown upon the carriage, was inexpressibly horrified, when he beheld the

fearful extremities to which the mob were evidently proceeding.

His first impulse was to fly to the Duke's assistance; but the crowd was so dense that he could not hope to reach the Duke's carriage; and supposing that he overcame the intervening obstacles, what would avail his single strength against that of an infuriated multitude. Nor was, indeed, the Duke's conduct towards those who were most dear to Cleveland, calculated to induce the latter to risk his own life, under circumstances where all attempt at interference seemed so hopeless.

Hardly knowing what to do, he remained chained to the spot. But his blood froze within him, when he saw the Duke fall into the hands of his assailants. He dashed open the window, and shouted an indignant remonstrance to the assassins below. They heeded him as little as

so many wild beasts, devouring their prey, would have regarded the singing of a bird on a branch above. He could not turn away from the scene. Its very excess of horror seemed to fascinate his senses. Yet amid the sickening disgust, which the spectacle of a cowardly and deliberate murder inspired him with, he was struck by the undaunted courage of the victim. Not a single cry for mercy escaped him. Though completely in the power of his tormentors, and mangled and mutilated in the most shocking manner, defiance and scorn of his foes seemed to animate his breast. Still he struggled against their cruelties with desperate but ineffectual efforts; until Cleveland observed one of his assailants clasp him round the neck, and whisper something in his ear. The man then dashed him on the ground, and strode away. By chance he turned his face towards the window where

Cleveland was standing, and the latter recognized Brisseau.

A striking change had taken place in the dying Duke's demeanour. He no longer offered the slightest resistance: he seemed insensible to the savage blows and stabs which were showered on him from every side. A fearful expression of inward terror occupied his fixed and glassy eyes; and in this state he remained, until he expired under the barbarous treatment which was inflicted on him.

The horrid spectacle he had just witnessed, and the conviction that the present disturbance was only the forerunner of still more fearful convulsions, concurred with many other reasons to hasten Cleveland's departure from France. As soon as tranquillity was restored in Paris, he obtained passports for Monsieur and Madame Cleveland, and set off for his native country

accompanied by Antonia. He experienced no obstacle in reaching England; where he was soon after his arrival united to Antonia, according to the ceremonies both of the Romish and Protestant churches.

Of the other characters of our story, we have but little to say. Of Cagliostro, or rather Jean Brisseau, nothing more was ever heard or known; and whether he rose to eminence in the revolution under some fresh appellation, or whether he lived a quiet retired life on the results of his à priori system of philosophy, cannot be ascertained. In the year 1794, an adventurer of the name of Cagliostro was apprehended at Rome, and sentenced to perpetual imprisonment. But this personage is certainly not identical with the hero of our story, who had long ceased to bear the title. It was more

probably some disciple, who thus paid the penalty of his presumption, in assuming the name without the abilities or resources of his master.

Count D'Ostalis fell a victim to the extreme beauty of his silk stockings. In the early part of the revolution, he happened to be passing one day down the Rue St. Honoré. The delicate flesh-coloured lustre of these elegant appendages to the lower man, roused the republican bile of a band of poissardes, who were parading the street. An enthusiastic citizeness belonging to this body, unable to endure the exasperating and anti-revolutionary spectacle of a pair of perfectly clean silk integuments, crept behind the unfortunate Count, and thrust him through the back with a pike; for the express purpose, as she afterwards informed the

world, of soiling the aristocrat's new stockings. The Marquis de Montolieu formed a part of the daily batches, which Robespierre sent to the guillotine.

FINIS.

NOTES.

NOTES.

The Affair of the Necklace.

From the many voluminous memoirs which have been written on this subject, the following brief sketch has been compiled, which it is hoped will enable the reader to understand the extracts subsequently quoted.

Soon after Louis' accession to the throne, Boemer, the Court jeweller, offered to his sovereign for sale a diamond necklace, valued at seventy thousand pounds sterling. The King conferred with his wife; and the royal pair declined the purchase, saying, that they had more need of ships than diamonds. Notwithstanding this refusal, Boemer kept the necklace

by for some years, displaying all the time an almost frantic anxiety to find a buyer. The knowledge of these circumstances suggested to the mind of an unprincipled adventuress, named Lamotte, the scheme of an imposture, which, for consummate audacity and reckless villainy, has never been surpassed in the annals of crime. She was a descendant of the House of Valois, though her immediate ancestors had fallen into the lowest depths of poverty. The Court, in compassion to her royal descent, allowed her a small pension. She became acquainted with the Cardinal de Rohan, who, struck by her air and address, and the circumstances of her birth, took much notice of her. The Cardinal, who had given offence some time previously to the Queen, was at this period excluded from all Court favour, and often lamented the fact in conversation. Madame Lamotte had the address to make him believe that she was an intimate friend of the Queen, and often enjoyed the honour of private interviews with her. The Cardinal entreated her to mention him favourably to her royal mistress. Lamotte, finding him such an easy dupe,

began to attempt a still grosser imposition. She assured him that Marie Antoinette secretly wished to buy the necklace, and had only forborne to do so out of deference to her husband's economical inclinations. She then proposed to the Cardinal, as a means of gaining the Queen's favour, that he should negociate the purchase of the necklace with Boemer on her account. The Cardinal expressed his delight at the scheme, provided he was assured of the Queen's acquiescence in the affair. The infamous Lamotte produced forged notes and letters in abundance, together with a specific order, purporting to be signed by the Queen, empowering him to purchase the necklace on her account. Armed with these documents, he repaired to Boemer. The jeweller proved a greater gull than the Cardinal. The ardent hopes and wishes of these men, the one to regain the Queen's favour, the other to dispose of his jewels, seem to have deprived them of all ordinary prudence, and to have inspired them with the most boundless credulity. Boemer transferred the necklace to the Cardinal, who delivered it, as he ima-

gined, into the Queen's own hands. Madame Lamotte had observed in the Palais Royal a young female, who strikingly resembled the Queen in external appearance. For a small reward, she was easily induced to personate the character of Marie Antoinette. She does not appear to have been admitted into the secret of the plot, but to have believed that she was acting a part, at the Queen's desire, in a hoax played on the Cardinal. The locality chosen for this scene was a retired summer-house in the park at Versailles. The time dusk. Trembling with hope and eagerness, the Cardinal sunk at the feet of the fictitious Marie Antoinette, and presented her with the necklace. The Queen, in a low and stifled voice, muttered her gratitude, and hoped that circumstances would soon allow her to publicly show him that favour which his obliging behaviour had already excited in her breast. Steps were heard approaching. The false Queen started; and exclaiming that her brother-in-law, the Comte d'Artois, was coming to see her, ran off with the

casket containing the necklace, leaving the Cardinal overwhelmed with joy at his gracious reception.

Boemer, receiving no money, grew uneasy, and applied in an indirect manner to the Queen. She, not understanding his hints, demanded explanation. An éclaircissement ensued. Boemer declared that the Cardinal de Rohan had purchased his necklace on behalf of the Queen. The Cardinal, when summoned to explain, gave up Madame Lamotte as his authority. The latter pretended to brazen the matter out, and averred that she had given the necklace to a valet of the Queen; but the man, when examined, flatly denied the fact. All the parties concerned were sent to the Bastille, and ultimately tried before the Parliament of Paris; who, to the indignation of the Court, acquitted the Cardinal, Cagliostro, and Mademoiselle D'Oliva (the girl who personated the Queen); and sentenced Madame Lamotte to be whipped, branded, and imprisoned.

The part which Cagliostro took in the affair, consisted in abusing the influence he possessed over the

Cardinal's mind, and in predicting to the credulous prelate that he would reap immortal honour and glory by undertaking the negotiation proposed by Madame Lamotte.

Extracts respecting the affair of the necklace, containing historical illustrations of the charactér of Count Cagliostro.

On the Saturday, the Cardinal returned from Versailles without having seen the Queen; having been told that she was taken suddenly ill with a violent headache, and obliged to go to bed: but at the same time a paper was given to him from her, "which (said he) seals the confidence her Majesty has in me."

A third appointment failed, in like manner, under the pretence of the Queen's being with the Dauphin, who was indisposed; but on putting him off for another week, he was told that her Majesty had the greatest plans in view for him, and was thinking of

nothing less than having him made Prime Minister. So far was he from not believing it, that he was alarmed by anticipation at the burden and difficulties of so important an office. I, too, from this moment, became uneasy, but from very different motives: I was afraid that this affair, still enveloped in so much mystery, might prove to be some court intrigue,—some abominable snare laid for the Cardinal. I told him my fears, which he turned into ridicule. "What! (said he) do you take me for a child, or an idiot?"—"No, certainly; but without being either the one or the other, you may be too sanguine—too easily imposed upon." "Well! well! come, in spite of all your incredulity, I will convince you; but give me your word not to speak to any soul alive of what I am going to tell you."—"You may depend upon me."—"Let us go into my closet. You know that the Queen is very fond of fine diamonds. Some time ago a magnificent necklace was shown to her, which she immediately longed to have; but the King thought it too dear, and would not buy it. Still she longed to have it.

As she could not pay for it but by instalments, and with frequent delays, of which the jewellers would not run the risk, it was necessary to find some person very secure in every respect, who would secretly make the purchase for her Majesty, and who was in a situation to answer to the tradesmen for the payments. The friend, of whom I have spoken to you, pointed me out, and undertook to make the proposal to me. I embraced it, without hesitation, as you will readily imagine; and this is the state of things. Well! Mr. Incredulous! what say you now?"—"I say that I cannot comprehend it at all. How can the Queen, who has all the diamonds in the crown at her command, have so great a desire for this necklace?"—"How? because, perhaps, in all the diamonds of the crown so perfect an assortment could not be made: I tell you there cannot be finer seen."—"Be it so; but what can she do with the necklace? for, as the King thought it too dear, she certainly will not think of wearing it in his presence; and in his presence she is, or may be, every moment."—"I cannot tell you whether she will or will not wear it; perhaps she may wish to

make a present of it, or to keep it locked up until she has a favourable moment of gaining the King's approbation of the purchase. I cannot say, and it does not become me to question her on those topics." —"Certainly not; but I hope, at least, that you will not conclude this affair without having seen the Queen."—"Doubtless not: see her, I must, to deliver the necklace to her."—"Is everything already settled with the jewellers?"—"Oh, yes! I will show you the agreement, signed by her Majesty, and all the articles approved in the margin by her, for I see you do not believe a word of what I am telling you." —"Pardon me, but in affairs so nice as this I am fond of having things upon paper."—"Do you know the Queen's writing?" said he to me, as he showed me a slight paper book, which he took out of his desk.—"I do not," I replied: but your Eminence ought to know it well."—"Oh, perfectly. Read! read!" I ran my eyes hastily over the conditions of this agreement, which was signed "Marie Antoinette de France;" and I certainly saw in the margin, opposite each article, the word *approved*, written in a

small regular hand, like the signature. "Well!" said he, with a satisfied air, "do you begin to see clear?"—"I see," said I, "If this be the Queen's writing, that she writes a pretty little hand; but I think you have undertaken a very ticklish commission."—"You will change your opinion when you see the sequel; have patience till this day eight days, for I am positively to see the Queen next week."

This certainly had no other foundation than the same promises with which the Cardinal had been kept in suspense for six weeks before. He went to Versailles, and returned without seeing her Majesty; the reason given was, that the King had passed the whole evening with her; and the Cardinal admitted this account with an ease and confidence that astonished me. I expressed great uneasiness to him at his situation. "And has not the Queen even written to you?" said I. "Have you not a single letter from her on this business?"—"No; but she has made her friend write to me, and that's the same thing. I will show you a letter that will satisfy you."

He opened a small press, in an angle between the fireplace and the window, and, taking out a handful of letters, read me one of them, about a page and a half long. It was an inexplicable piece of ambiguity, which I had no sooner read, than I said to the Cardinal, with warmth, "If it be not, my Lord, the most respectable woman in the kingdom who has written this letter, you are most shamefully played upon. What does all this signify? There are expressions in it which may apply to some circumstances relative to the necklace when we know them; but they may as well, and better, be applied to a hundred other stories: in short, this letter is so inapplicable, that, happen what will, you can make no use of it; and I am convinced that the person who wrote it had this in view."—"Sir! do not talk in that manner. You would speak very differently if you knew how much that person is in every respect above all suspicion; besides, have not you seen the agreement, signed and approved by the Queen?"—"Yes; but as I am unacquainted with her Majesty's

writing, which may very well have been forged, and also with the lady so estimable, who may be much less so than you imagine,—I am more apprehensive than ever that this affair may turn out very troublesome to you. There is but one thing that can remove my fears; and that is, as you have not yet delivered the necklace, that you promise me, and I conjure you, not to part with it but to the Queen herself."—"I do promise you, and so you may be easy: indeed, you would be perfectly so, if you knew the name of the person; all I can tell you is, that there is not a more distinguished one in the kingdom."

Two days after this I went into Brittany, where I had not been more than six weeks, before I learned, by the public papers, that the Cardinal was arrested, without any particulars of the cause of so extraordinary an event; but it was not difficult for me to guess it.—*Memoirs of Bertrand de Moleville.*

From the Memoirs of the Abbé Georgel (Secretary to the Cardinal Rohan.)

In the mean time, an unfortunate circumstance contributed to hurry the Cardinal still more unfortunately into extraordinary adventures. I do not know what monster, envious of the tranquillity of honest men, had vomitted forth upon our country an enthusiastic empiric — a new apostle of the religion of nature, who created converts in the most despotic manner, and subjected them entirely to his influence.

Some speedy cures effected in cases that were pronounced incurable, and fatal in Switzerland and Strasburgh, spread the name of Cagliostro far and wide, and raised his renown to that of a truly miraculous physician. His attention towards the poor and his contempt for the rich, gave his character an air of superiority and interest which excited the greatest enthusiasm. Those whom he chose to honour with his familiarity, left his society in

ecstacy at his transcendant qualities. The Cardinal de Rohan was at his residence at Saverne, when the Count de Cagliostro astonished Strasburgh and all Switzerland with his conduct, and the extraordinary cures he performed. Curious to see so remarkable a personage, the Cardinal went to Strasburgh. It was found necessary to use interest to be admitted to the Count. "If M. le Cardinal is sick," said he, "let him come to me and I will cure him: if he be well, he has no business with me, nor have I with him." This reply, far from giving offence to the vanity of the Cardinal, only increased the desire he had to be acquainted with him. At length, having gained admission to the sanctuary of this new Esculapius, he saw, as he has since declared, on the countenance of this uncommunicative man, a dignity so imposing, that he felt himself penetrated by religious awe, and that his first words were inspired by reverence. This interview, which was very short, excited more strongly than ever the desire of a more intimate acquaintance. At length it was obtained, and the crafty empiric timed his conduct and his advances

so well, that at length, without seeming to desire it, he gained the entire confidence of the Cardinal, and possessed the greatest ascendancy over him. " Your soul," said he one day to the Cardinal, " is worthy of mine, and you deserve to be the confidant of all my secrets." This declaration captivated all the intellectual faculties and feelings of a man, who at all times, had run after the secrets of chemistry and botany.

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After detailing the intrigues of Madame Lamotte, the Abbé Georgel reverts to the influence which Cagliostro exercised over the Cardinal.

Cagliostro, at that time recently arrived at Paris, was consulted. This Python mounted his tripod. The Egyptian invocations were made at night, illuminated by an immense number of wax tapers, in the Cardinal's own room. The oracle, under the inspiration of its familiar demon, pronounced that the negotiation was worthy of the prince, that it would be crowned with success, that it would raise the goodness of the Queen to its height, and bring

to light that happy day which would unfold the rare talents of the Cardinal for the benefit of France and the human race. I am writing facts, though it may be imagined that I am only relating fictions. I should think so myself, were I not certain of the statements that I make. Be it as it may, the advice of Cagliostro dissipated all the Cardinal's apprehensions, and it was decided that he should acquit himself as soon as possible of a commission, which was regarded as equally honourable and flattering.

From the Memoirs of Madame Campan.

MADAME DE LAMOTTE, wishing to gratify at once her hatred and revenge, declared, on her first examination, that the Count di Cagliostro was the contriver of the fraud of the necklace; that he had persuaded the Cardinal to purchase it. She insinuated that it was taken to pieces by this Italian or Sicilian Count and his wife; and that they alone reaped the profits of it. This declaration, supported by a thousand

other falsehoods, which unfortunately, however absurd, wore but too great an appearance of probability, caused the singular personage implicated in it to be sent to the Bastille, along with the woman who resided with him. The latter remained there nearly eight months; and the pretended Count did not come out until after the suit was decided.

It is certain that the Cardinal de Rohan was credulous enough to place the greatest confidence in this empirical alchymist, who had assured him, that it was possible to make gold, and to transmute small diamonds into large precious stones; but he only cheated the Cardinal out of large sums, under pretence of developing to him the rarest secrets of the Rosicrusians and other madmen, who have implicitly believed, or pretended to believe, the absurd folly of the philosopher's stone, the elixir of life, &c. Thus the Cardinal saw part of his money evaporate in the smoke of crucibles, and part found its way into the pockets of the sharper, who passed himself off as a great alchymist.

When this person was examined by the Court

touching the affair of the necklace, he made his appearance before the magistrates, dressed in green, embroidered with gold; his locks were curled from the top of his head, and fell in little curls down his shoulders, which gave him a most singular appearance, and completed his resemblance to a mountebank. "Who are you?—whence came you?" he was asked. "I am a noble traveller," was his reply. At these words every countenance relaxed; and seeing this appearance of good humour, the accused entered boldly on his defence. He interlarded his jargon with Greek, Arabic, Latin, and Italian; his looks, his gestures, his vivacity, were as amusing as his speech. He withdrew, very well pleased with having made his judges laugh.

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